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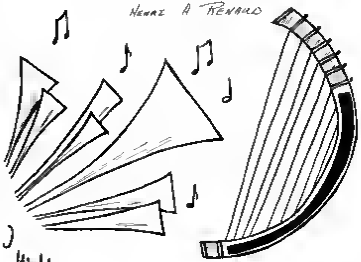
acred Heart Parish

Spiritwood - Sask.

THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

Sacred Heart Parish - Spiritwood

— AUTHOR —
HENRY A. RENNARD



I will celebrate Your Love forever, Yahweh

Ps 89

DEDICATION

To write this history to prove how
has imposed the help of many
To single anyone from
to forget someone else

To make this history
has required the courage of many
To single anyone for praise would
be to miss mentioning

We therefore dedicate
and the years it recalls
to the Author of all
May we celebrate

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Printed by
Turner-Warwick Printers Ltd.
1979

NEW BEGINNINGS

A new land! The search for a new home-estate almost became said to be settlement! Abraham left his family in search for a new land. The People of God would one such through the wilderness to the land of milk and honey.

We, likewise, have also similar incentives: the pushed pioneers to find new farmers a northern Saskatchewan during the late 1920's and early 1930's. With land in the south already developed, settlers pushed further and further north into the park lands. Fort St. Louis, Duck Lake and Prince Albert became places to buy from. And with the settlers came the Faith: these all grew and flourished.

One of the first contacts with catholicism, homegrown seems to have had was the establishment of the Oblate missions in Battleford, Lake Alderin a lakebed sometime around 1872. As the settlers came south the pleas of the missions tried to keep in touch and to stay visible. Their heroic, Father Lacombe, carried his activities over the period they lived in such as in 1879 or 1920. He held masses at St. Cyprien as well as in the Stanovan in the Shell Lake, from a

In 1922 another mission opened to the north-east of Shellwood known as Viola #1. There excellent facilities became Fr. Nolan. It led the Laventure missionary for 3 4 and returned regularly to conduct Christmas and Easter in Bayview, Prospect, many and way on.

Official worship services did not until 1925 but a church was erected by our new Father A. Tomba became the first resident priest in the region. Laventure was named after the family settlers of the same name and the parish was dedicated to St. Bonaventure.

A rest in the parade

LAVENTURE

The history of Laventure is closely linked with that of Spirit wood. To begin with S Bonaventure Parish originally in the parishe in Spirit wood 1929 and in Laventure 1930. The parishes was loved to set it aside by state and the late 1930 when a crash in the popula ion changes in the ne, and greate s ure of responsibilities fell to the shoulders of the Church of St. Bonaventure. Many of the parishioners some south a Spirit wood to from unions services. From by 1970, an agreement was reached through which the church building were, small seal became the Church's earthly. Laventure a history part of the Archdiocese.

Laventure parish was opened and named after Fr. A. Tomba, appointed priest in 1925 pastor from this Fr. Tomba was a small man in stature but a big heart and a great love for the Lord. He was an active Knights of Columbus member and was instrumental in the building from the Eucharistic Congress in Saskatoon.

Fr. A. Tomba.

Bishop Scherlich for the third and fourth weeks of Advent, 1926 is rather interesting:

3rd Sunday: Laventure
Monday: Bellaire
Tuesday: Greenwich at Waterfire's)
Wednesday: Make up Lake (at Cudmore's)
Thursday: Lunch at Leatrice's!
Friday: Laventure
Saturday: at Saskatoon

4th Sunday: Fort Lake (at Turgeon's)
Monday: The Lake (at Simonac's)
Tuesday: Mayberry at McMillan's
Wednesday: back to Laventure

Fr. Tomba continued as parish priest at Laventure until 1930. He would be then moved to Pethrokne, from where continued serving much of the area mentioned above, including Mayberry for a few years.

NEW CHURCH AT SPIRITWOOD

During the summe o 1925 *Fr. Joseph A. Brunlac*, newly ordained was appointed as assis to Fr. Tomba. By the seventh mile construction he was given the care of the mission but would become sacred to the parish of Spiritwood. The

function of the new church would be Mass No. 1 performed from the C.W.B. the forty soldiers paid in November 1930.

Fr. McAuley, Bill and Billy.

Plans were made and preparations made for the first church building all underway. It was from through the voluntary labours of the parishioners, the enthusiasm for the foundation was kept strong, as Archbishop Mannix dedicated Wilfrid Digby Frank Terence Victor Hennessy Leo Basil Bill was the head architect and design of the style of stones that surrounded twenty to twenty-two men at time. Despite the time and despite that it did cost Mr Sasanow forty things going and for his labours, received a great deal of one hundred dollars during November and December of that year

The church completed 1931

Some of the timber had been cut the previous to this by parishioners, and was stored at a mill operated by a Mr Bell at the Point. More timber was purchased from the same Mr Bell. The new structure was of wood, only by its dry nest with a balcony by twenty feet north by occasions attached to the rear. The shell of the building was up in the night.

Though far from complete the new church was ready for the Christmas Midnight Mass of 1930. An impromptu choir

formed by Mrs Maude Bourke was quickly organized and after a couple twenty minute practice sang in Spanish and Latin that "Appeared to be fantastic with his own sense of humour called one of the parishioners forward during mass and whispered, "Do the choristers sing well ? They really sing terribly". The choir was terrified of this remark until after the mass was over when they could laugh away considerably about their performance

THE PARISH IS BORN

By January 1931 the church was [illegible] and was a [illegible] parish in the area and provided with [illegible] by Father [illegible] Bishop Simonds the Archbishop [illegible] appointed Father [illegible] Mr. Bill the first parish priest [illegible] Father [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

J. R. Allard, for Spiritwood Fr. Benoit Lt., Saskatoon, Guy Bridger and Charles Mansseau. Following the meeting we are told, the participants shared in a large glass of sour milk during the event. According to eye-witness reports the atmosphere in the cold back in Spiritwood was quite jolly!

The boundary between the new parish was described as having running from the along Section 24 of Range 17 and 18 to the 53rd north latitude, the section belonging to Lanigan. The south half to belong to Spiritwood. The official request is requested with the seal and signature of approval by Joseph H. Pascal Martyrs, bishop of Prince Albert and Saskatoon July 8, 1929.

TITLE OF THE NEW PARISH

The parish was duly on its way in beginning to the Sacred Heart. However there are some indications that it had been previously considered to dedicate it to the Canadian Martyrs. The first book of accounts for Spiritwood opened on August 31, 1928 has on the cover page the inscription, Missions of the Canadian Martyrs.

The Canadian Martyrs.

The parish name to be confirmed by the decree the French speaking delegates in the ballroom of the new post office. Gaspé, Lac St. Augustin, Spiritwood." the first Pentecost Rose Gaspé was chosen as all the martyrs, a layman of Notre Dame, patron saint by Joseph Brebeuf. In a Lavalterie Montreal missionary there Lanigan by June 4th 1928 indicating the name as Rose Gaspé" as a name to think about to [illegible] – why. Could it be because of the attempt to name the new parish in his honor?

Why then was the parish not dedicated to Rose Gaspé or the Canadian Martyrs, perhaps a way because they had still not been canonized by the Church. [illegible] as Fr. Allard As for the community the name Gaspé also lapsed and the name of Spiritwood was chosen. The name already designated the area at least as early as 1928 (the announcement book of Lanigan announces a Mass for "Spiritwood on the 5th Sunday [illegible].

The Sacred Heart...

THE FIRST PASTOR: FR. JOSEPH A. BEAULAC

Fr. J. A. Beaulac

Ordained on May 6, 1926 at Sudbury, Ontario where he had completed his theological studies in then came west to the diocese for which he had been ordained. Bishop Albert His first task was that of being the first bishop Fred became a secretary one of the unfulfilling of a new diocese. His duty was to drive the Bishop a car by.

Beaulac, characteristically darling and determined had told he knew how to drive though his experience had been rather

The real test came on a trip from Bishop to Bear Lake. the roads were terrible and the automobile loaded to a dangerous tipping the Bishop, stylish and *edifice* passengers and the water! Not long after Fr. Beaulac received his eagle-eyed to go to Lacombe. Someone asked that the bishop would be left alone with another driver.

In the summer of 1930 he became the assistant to Fr. Joseph Lacombe. Here Fr. Beaulac was the pastor he was in charge of the mission known as Sparrowood. The Sparrowood was growing, the town site had been drawn and the Canadian Pacific had chosen a lot for the first church building.

Some parishioners had in hope the per town would or smaller and it was now time to start the erection of the edifice. Father Beaulac was there to lend a hand. A young man with much energy, devotion and he spearheaded the project, and set about to find the funds a load to its completion.

He began canvassing in any town in Se received in August. The Scandinavians were and and the structure took shape. By Christmas, it was sufficiently completed to have the Midnight Mass in the church. Father had taken up residence in the rear part of the building. Rumor that were not the spacious poorly insulated and furnished very unsanitary. To keep warm during the night, he made use of the heavy house blankets for the day.

As time went on he set up the newly formed parish of the Sacred Heart. Oddly enough baptisms, marriages, funerals were all recorded in the Lacombe register until 1931. Why? Is it a puzzle was it because there was a ruling it would not be a split parish?

Fr. Beaulac could be termed a peripatetic organizer those first years were filled with road parties, banners, pennies, fund raising. He was a popular parishioners were not allowed to hang back and if they did he could be blunt. The same applies to the liturgy. the style of worship, the parish was. Father was methodical and determined. From some of his parishioners, he learned and mastered the music, especially sacred, in some of the missions. Fr. Beaulac was a stickler for good standard singing and he used to the music, sometimes and dismal low and high notes.

When his brother, Monsignor Beaulac of Edmonton, died Father Beaulac participated in solemn requiem Mass. Monsignor Beaulac was the first Bishop Bishop. The organist assigned to be used with an unaccustomed volume. Chagrin in 1931 Father 1934 when Fr. Beaulac would be place the first pastor.

MANY OTHER "FIRSTS"

Of course, there were many other "firsts" which Father Beaulac made. We have already mentioned the first parish, the first church, the first Mass, the first altar. In a matter of time Father got the first organ for a church in the town. On January 13, 1929 Fr. Beaulac baptized Joseph Bruno-Laurent Fontecchio, born January 6, son of Philippe Fontecchio and Blanche Perrier. Godparents were Bruno Bergonzi and Catherine Cimpone.

It was the same year the first funeral was held at Sparrowood. Here, also, documentation was not attempted.

It was on Sunday August 1, 1929 that wedding bells rang for Henry and Irene Delaurier. Fr. Beaulac was the officiating priest.

Rev. Joseph A. Beaulac
Sparrowood

The first official baptismal records and celebrations of Confirmation by Bishop Fred Scheuer took place on November 6, with late and late Pierre Bouvet acted as sponsors for the thirty-one young candidates confirmed. In its report to the way about it a visit. Bishop Fred Scheuer writes: Friday Nov. 4, 1932 departure alone from Ferrier Alfred on board the C.N.R. Arrival at Spirit noon at 4:15 p. m. Official reception in the church at 5:30 p.m. Solemn address by Fr. Ayotte talking in broad strokes the history of the parish confirmation exam closely by forming High Mass on Sunday

Nov. 6. For local reasons we have not released the church on this occasion we will block it here.

Bishop Fraser himself arrived for another pastoral visit in 1935 and a room is furnished in the rectory awaiting. Before it is the Manchester of the church at 7.30 a.m. Sunday August 4 1935.

FIRST YEARS

The early years were difficult. 1929 saw the beginning of the world wide great depression. Though the outbreak had come to Spotbrook and businesses began to locate in the village, it could not be considered as a prosperous area. Crops were often small. Rod was often a factor. Thus the area was hit by the drought that plagued the prairies of Western Canada. Wheat prices were low, some said that as low as twenty-eight cents a bushel in 1937 some of the crops were so small as two bushels per acre.

Parkwood

The parish had no g[illegible] finances [illegible] ex[illegible] scarcity. But Father Bel[illegible] [illegible] action on began re. A meeting on the 18th of [illegible] [illegible] to organize and by the records more than [illegible] and he [illegible] raised. Adam[illegible] with over [illegible] patrons. [illegible] of women having [illegible] with the annual dues, averaging [illegible] to ten dollars per family per year plus [illegible] Sunday collections (which in 1928-29 totalled [illegible] from these [illegible] [illegible] mostly meeting the church [illegible] [illegible] and expenses paid.

In 1930 it seems the parish borrowed [illegible] hundred dollars and in as much as we could tell lay the principle [illegible] interest had not yet been repaid in 1934 [illegible] hundred dollars still remained to be paid when Fr. Roy arrived in 1940 [illegible] that time, four years interest was also owing. Add to that the fact that the pastor's salary (one hundred dollars per month) was not fully paid. A bi-annual meeting on February 16, 1937 in minutes [illegible] the difficulty of the parish in regard to indebtedness, especially towards the pastor.

From the cemetery the first residence of the pastor has been moved to a house on Pine Street West, but in 1934, it was back to the site, [illegible] this time a new two story four addition that had been added to the church.

An appeal that was occasionally made was for furnished. Wood provided heat for church and rectory throughout the 1930's and the 1940's. Most of it was donated, and the pastor had to instruct the parishioners of this need. In one instance, at least, Fr. Burrell mentions that [illegible] to avoid in the church, it was because of lack of wood. The [illegible] played the generosity of the members of the congregation as being in some wanted. The same problem of wood shortages was re-[illegible] in the 1940's.

The difficulties, were not all financial. Those of us who would like to recall the "good old days" must admit that we have [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

A group of [illegible] Hungarian refugees, including Fr. Acs, Hungarian Canon in exile, at World Youth Day celebrations in the parish. Whatever the scale of [illegible] large number of Hungarian families

[illegible] and people

immigrated to Canada, and in the 1970's, many [illegible] north and also settled in the [illegible] Toronto area.

The depression of the 1930's and the [illegible] were hard times for both parish and [illegible] Many [illegible] found [illegible] and [illegible] of [illegible].

By 1929 the making of the acquisition was complete. In [illegible] plan was made to build Our Lady of Perpetual [illegible] Bathurst and Lawrence Avenues. By the [illegible] of the month, [illegible] was sold such that [illegible] considerably higher than it was in 1929 or [illegible] and [illegible] were [illegible] hundred and [illegible] families. Five hundred people [illegible] Hungarian [illegible] Sacred Heart in 1930 was [illegible] by [illegible] and [illegible] had [illegible] Hungarian [illegible] [illegible] Hungarian families in the Maryland area [illegible] [illegible] in the Maryland area. Add [illegible] other [illegible] [illegible] hundred families in the started as [illegible] Sacred Heart parish and was set [illegible] On holy days [illegible] was higher than [illegible] Germans in the same [illegible] [illegible] affiliated the numbers are still impressive.

[illegible] [illegible]

CHURCH LIFE OF THE 1930's

The Mass was [illegible] the central act of worship of a Catholic community. In the years [illegible] [illegible] and celebrated the Eucharist with the family and then [illegible] hours [illegible] Sacred [illegible], or [illegible] Christ house. As the communities became [illegible] [illegible] and a church was built. Lawrence 1924, Spiritwood, 1926 St Stephens, 1932 Kirkland 1934. Then the Catholic of these communities gathered on a regular basis in these temples to worship.

Other spiritual events were first the recitation of the [illegible] baptisms, confessions, weddings [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] played a much more important part than [illegible] the people themselves. [illegible] [illegible] was a typical devotion [illegible] [illegible] the Sunday Mass or combined with the rosary, before the rosary or the Way of the Cross on Sunday afternoon or evening.

Some devotions were a once a year exercise. Many are still [illegible] the Corpus Christi Procession of the Blessed Sacrament. A practice which lasted as late as 1950's. Forty Hour Devotions were two days of continuous adoration of the Blessed Sacrament punishment. Many these were so

Street Scene — prepared for War.

ping and trade in the community. It was from all these and his neighbouring people he gather'ed his flock either with words of encouragement, or by giving the parishes pastoral visits.

There were new and then a number of children as it was somewhat difficult to keep a pair of pocket fills and enough to one preached by Fr. R. Bagnall, June 21 to 28, 1931 (Fr. Dugard would like to come the first Bishop of Prince Rupert. A musical quality consisted of a Mass and confessions or sermons in the morning with exercises, prayers and confessions in the evening. Closing for over a week. It gave an opportunity to all to the teachings of the Church and allow the parishioners to know them better.

By giving education on catechism obviously is always an important part of church life in 1933 Fr. Beasley announced catechism at 4:30 p.m. every Saturday in almost one year an improvement will be confirmed him that took place in 1932. In other years, catechism classes were held after school hours at the school. In his absence, catechism was also taught.

Through the basic teachings of the Church may not have changed the mode of travelling seems to have left so

Easter Fr. Joe Dugard.

Announcements and even complete sermons of the 1930's are kept in our parish records. The social issues preached would perhaps surprise the younger generation of today. Standards in the parish were severely reprimanded: the abuse of alcohol, public drunks, hanging out in the town by boys and girls playing ball together.

Dancing seemed to be looked on as the most blameworthy of all. Mr. Dugard was always opposed, but to no avail, to the dances held in the city. And when a public hall was built in connection with the parish became common the words of Satan and hell fire preached.

It got a little at the mercy of the times. He spoke from experience of the 1930's preached in Spirit wood: it as a scandal for young men and young women to play ball together, it was dangerous for a girl of those young women and she a time to walk home, it was bad for modesty and chastity. And while the parents, sons, parents the dear loved the daughter the other things, we have called upon ourselves because of the and the sins against the blood reveals of the day.

Another subject over which could be attending was the constant moving from one of the young men and women during the 30's. At the C.N. waterfront so few young ladies and young men could keep their pledge, together, in the back of a truck under the covering darkness.

The parish, as of dancing, band fairs did not seem to bother the people and dances of all kinds did exist. Prohibition is a problem today as we commonly. A steady was so in the 30's, as well. Even under frequent references, stories made the rounds of the parish of certain home news of the surrounding weekly and some parishioners apparently were partners to such activities.

And the point might be consoled to know that getting people to New Year's Day Mass was already a problem fifty years ago. The New Party does not seem to be a recent invention.

It was soon after when Caddy Jex were encouraged to be a choir only classes permanently. Prosecutions of the public of the lessons practices seemed to be threatened by some sides and especially by counting with the protestants (a term the use also of non-Catholics).

CHURCH SOCIAL LIFE & FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

The church as family is very much as it was a decade as we have stated. Many events are taken a more flexible Church dates and occasions that do not meet the needs as each year projects were organized to bring in the extra income was out.

These lunch and teas also made the a social life during the 30's. Each fall the ladies brought together the parishioners' income supported expenses but with the exception of the 1929 because the profits were not sufficient to satisfy the material requirements of the parish.

during the long winters there were card parties football matches and other get-togethers at the Institute. They provided much fun and brought quantity packs to sixteen or twenty-two and twenty-nine dozens. Some suppers brought in seventy-five and fifty-nine dollars.

In the summer it was usual for the church picnic may have been the predecessor of the "Sports Day" of the present. It was helped to bring a few dollars and promoted the people to mingle themselves as the result of the hard cause.

Movies were also announced in entertainment in the 1930's, e.g., "The Vanishing Pioneer" shown at the Institute Sept. 25 to 26, 1931.

A more current word was of raising funds was the result of church power or chicken in the early 30's, etc. Also in the church could be served for five dollars per year. Such finally was arranged their pew or chairs and 10 years did not pay the use of the pew could be fined with coming in church and finding your pew or chairs taken or even be chairs removed). In one day and age, it seems like a weak system and even enough it did cause hard feelings now and then.

C. W. L.

Speaking of suppers, another project to meet funds we cannot help but think of the Catholic Women's League. Besides providing a social and expert ladies in the parish, the services they rendered to the local church cannot be suitably mentioned. The City was held together continuously alive, without them the parish would have had more grave problems.

The history of the C. W. L. in a local organization goes back to the early 1920's. The records that we have can bend up one month that far back but it is church announcements in reports of a new branches in the west and those referring to the C. W. L. e.g. on April 21 1925 an announcement of the organization of ladies into the C. W. L. at 9:30, services a month that these are their members in the C. W. L. as first the C. W. L. are in charge of a supper in 1936. Mrs. John Lalonde is president and finally in 1941 the C. W. L. was dissolved and the group combined as the "Ladies of the Altar".

The 1930 Bishop's report of his pastoral, not to published says: We classified the ladies of the C. W. League for its parochial banquet that they had prepared in the event of real usefulness.

By these bits and pieces of information along with the references made to parish suppers picnics, work at the church rebuilding etc. one can say with to the ladies of the city for having been pillars of the Church standing up to it through their hard work and endurance.

We regret and that in the few months, a few references are made of a junior C. W. L. young young ladies who along with their elder counterparts, took their charge, many responsible for the church activities.

MEN'S ORGANIZATION: SACRED HEART LEAGUE

If the women contributed much in the subsistence of the parish, the men were not altogether absent. The Sacred Heart League was a man's organization prominent in the parish around the turn of the 20 s. In 1936, a Ladies' membership of forty

What their work was all about is not too clear. From the information we can glean, they were called upon to provide the manpower for the parish, mainly descending e.g. for the Corpus Christi procession, services at mass and perhaps to help assist Little women like mothers and women. The Bishop does mention them in his reports.

What did the organization finds out? It is a fact lost in the pages of history

FR. NARCISSE BURRELL

Second Pastor

The Rev. N. Burrell M.A. Ph.D. arrived as the parish of Sagkeewood with Rev. C. A. Wyndham Consultant on Friday May 11 th., 5 p.m. 1934 " (From an early anonymous note.

Fr. Burrell had been ordained in 1924 or 1925. Because of poor health, he had been refused ordination in the Basilica diocese. Accepted in the Prince Albert diocese during his first appointment as "Fr-in-w, he studied at Oxford, returning to Ireland where he did his Doctor Thesis. In 1929 he left his home town of study at Budapest, Hungary (his country was the autonomous Hungarian families in the Wallace area must have been the surname. When he returned to Canada, he was sent to Asquith, a parish he himself may be employed. But his ability to speak and to write Hungarian undoubtedly was considered a necessary item in parish of Spiritwood visit St. Stephen s at a mission. in 1936.

Once Wyndham also moved with Father Burrell was a permanent from Budapest he was to spend time here to study theology under the guidance of the pastor leading to the priesthood. His mother and sister also came to Spiritwood and lived at a small house near the rectory. Eventually Mrs. Wyndham did some of the housekeeping chores at the rectory.

The success of the summer excursions in Spiritwood broke down two years later 1936 when Canon and Cole wrote the Bishop he did not intend to his native land, along with his fare by in 1936.

When Mr. Fox arrived here the "money" was hardly habitable so Father Burrell stayed for a few months with the Rectors s. During that time the vestry by twenty-four times at the back of the church was enlarged to the full width of the church made to have two floors and became the vestry as it stood until the 50's. The renovations and modernization commenced after August of 1934.

The years that Fr. Burrell spent in Saskatchewan as a missionary priest were full of interest and variety. He had the greatest pleasure in his work and in many friendships. And with the single failure of 1935 - he did not improve.

Fr. Burrell had a number of hobbies and family in the Maritimes and made their financial and prize fine letter from the parishioners he managed to get grants organized. Bishop Pascal Fraser, to his report in his 1935 pastoral visit wrote:

Thanks to generous benefactors from beyond the parish, the pastor has been able to enhance the parish property by a fence, a platform, a chicken coop, a horse, a catholic kitchen, etc. Moreover he has endowed the church with a splendid altar and gilded the tabernacle of the Blessed Sacrament of Splitwood and a number of religious articles.

Between Fr. Burrell paid for out of his own pocket, either through lecture or class visits. As an example, the bishop added him to make his office many household items and furnishings he donated to the parish.

The priests were accompanied by other problems. The numerous missions, the distance he had to travel over poor roads, the strain of not always being understood sometimes made him extremely sensitive to people from different races, and Fr. Burrell experienced his moments - there is still evidence - they became he from time faster and he was forced to abandon his mission by the fall of 1940 that just before he left the parish he was trying to get the parishioners to build a parish hall. He had to at last settle and convince but he proved successful in two districts after he left. A nasty story which may be related to the native Ukrainians and find those of modern in 1941.

SATELLITE COMMUNITIES

A the Splitwood area there are small communities of interest also grew. One parish a history cannot be told without considering the experiences of these neighbouring areas and their people.

By 1925 Splitwood was the central point with an Fr. Burrell had established Fr. Bernard as pastor in 1934, mission and [illegible] Wh. Bishop Pascal became sure for

A missionary group
Kamsack today

[illegible] Fr. [illegible] the visit to the Ukrainian missions of Saint Basil the Great, Fr. [illegible] Mission, Immaculate Conception Mission. The missions of Wroxton, Norbury, Canora, Sandy Lake, Spy Hill, Hamlet of Springwood Superior, Home Church [illegible] Mount Shell Lake, Mission Church, Mission at Lake Lenore to south of Muldrew Lake [illegible] in the 1929 [illegible] Bishop's report from St. Stephen's and Mission in Kamsack in town church [illegible] were being made or handed [illegible] at Shell Lake and Kamsack [illegible] Church among which [illegible] Fr. Burrell [illegible] Church [illegible] Splitwood.

All of the work in the Ukrainian Catholic Church would ultimately be absorbed by the Holy Heart Parish. This is the [illegible] parish of Kamsack would be dissolved and be part Russian between Splitwood and Loverdy. But the fact remains that the history of each area is very much a part of our history.

ST. STEPHEN'S COLONY

It was mentioned above that a large number of Hungarian families settled around Springwood. Undoubtedly, [illegible] Hungarian people was a considerable reason for the [illegible] in culture and language. It was in reading the files and the papers a great deal to see in terms of the [illegible] and how dated February 1929 was written to Bishop Pascal Fraser by A. C. Snyder a colony public on behalf of the Hungarian population over hundred and thirty families five hundred people. In a resident priest of their language. Hungarians a large in western Canada and not easy to [illegible] to be Hungarian and the years to say must and in addition as late he could [illegible] after he left Lawrence to go to Bethlehem he it [illegible] successful in the Hungarian settlement as the bureau for example at the Martin Orona, Nora and then a Hungarian priest from Strasbourg [illegible] Fr. Stanka Pal would come to minister to these parishioners.

A 934 Fr. Burrell came to Spuzewood he had settled two priest in Hungary and [illegible] and write Hungarian by then St. Stephen's had his church.

The church was a big structure twenty by thirty feet, built on Section 25, Township 40 Range 31 West of 3rd. It was erected by the parishioners sometime between 1930 and 1932. In 1934, Father Burrell would need parishioners from the district to build a new and large church but the project never seems to have taken place.

The opening of services remained a question mark but it would appear that they were fairly regular during the summer months and occasionally during the winter.

After Fr. Burrell left Spuzewood the succeeding priests Fr. Fetter and Rev. continued the services following as St. Stephen's Catechism classes were organized for the young people during the summer - sought [illegible] at least on a few occasions by the Sisters of Service from Stockholm, Sask. As we in 1943 a Father Weiss of Regina gave a retreat in Hungarian at the church. Again in 1954, a priest had been

planned in 1936 but the first mass was not held until 1938. A change of pastors may have led to the plans being dropped. The Bishop's successor was Fr. Burghart in 1939 in 1940 and perhaps in other years.

The church remained in use until 1955 after which it seems to have fallen into disuse. Eventually the chairs from the church were used for the Separate School some of the

[illegible] owned by a man

PAPAUME

While hopes and fears for the future of many communities would seem to be the same, the church in Papaume, which was [illegible] 1935 [illegible] seven years was a long distance. We know little of Fr. Tim Ba[illegible] much of Catholic neighborhoods by going over to Borne gathering them [illegible] saying mass and ministering to them. Baptisms was one of these sacraments.

During the 1930's draw was a free ag that it would be preferable to have it erected in Papaume. When Bishop Pearl became came in 1935 he went to Papaume decided and held a conference as for when young people in the home of Mrs. Emmet. After lunch a meeting was held with the parishioners.

The Bishop stated that the logic of a location was the building of a small church. Some was already two miles. The bishop agreed, and a board of trustees was elected. J. B. Chartrand, Joseph Lavasseur and Orville Chenier. It was to obtain one acre and draw up [illegible] plan.

However as we read through the records we find nothing more about the project. We can only surmise that the people [illegible] the decision to invest in Spiritwood for mass services

station went down to the Shell Lake chapel. And so it [illegible] building to be [illegible] surrender but once [illegible]

As for the people they do have changed [illegible] The [illegible] were hard hit[illegible] and many [illegible] Hungarian family [illegible] moved away, both east and west. But many stayed and are now [illegible] community

GABORIAU S

Sarah of M Hyrd

The same fault of the B [illegible] 935 records that Fr. Ba[illegible] made to Caboo one home [illegible] some miles east it [illegible] called There three young people were confirmed other a Mass Apparently Bro was now to of the areas by Fr Burke Richard and gathered he neighbors for Mass in the mid-thirties

O that time as 1935 the Bishop writes At 1 p.m. all [illegible] Gaboriaus' house and [illegible] set what with Fr Labbe in a [illegible] through swamps, snowy holes in confluse Mr Schmude and there [illegible] Fr Labbe forty five minutes to go inside and it [illegible] It was something [illegible] road [illegible]

The Catechist Mission was not [illegible] to take on my They encouraged having [illegible] mass and then by Fr Burke L. On January 7 1937 a [illegible] Bishop Caboriau [illegible] meeting was held that came to a decision [illegible] up [illegible] It would be ninety-two by thirty-two feet on one acre of land at the northeast corner of the NW quarter Section 8 Township 48 Range 9 West of 3rd and to be donated by Bishop Gaboriau

A few more meetings were [illegible] by this plans had five project [illegible] was shelved and [illegible] y 1938. The area became a part of St. M Hyrd parish

MILDRED

[illegible] the Church in Mildred going back about [illegible] Sometime before 1900 the small [illegible] Salvation Army Barracks [illegible] Sunday afternoon [illegible] the Salvation in the Gaiety Theatre [illegible] [illegible] Mildred. He sought [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Fr George Lomax and couples at Harper Lake.

Immediately upon his arrival he took on a new task. The very next day a parishioner, Mr Morton, died. And one day after that, the new pastor buried John Fox, daughter of Frank Sr. and Katherine Sahagun.

The task of finding a suitable workhorse was thus facile. The parish purchased a horse from Walter Wissinger and moved it onto the lots adjacent to the Church. Cash for the purchase was borrowed from Mr. Woodcock, a merchant and parishioner. The sober parish members repaid him by finishing early.

Fr. Lomax seems not to have read between lines carried his departure in 1933. It was extremely difficult for him to leave his beloved people but reasons was already mustering him from spirit of repentance to them. After a brief period of inattentiveness in Zamora Park, he died and was buried there in 1955.

He was a true shepherd to his people; he is remembered almost universally with cordial appreciation by all who knew him. But his revered shepherding abilities were not the greatest to very little assume an inordinate tendency of his years as pastor. For business purposes, does have a signature that can only be fulfilled by a few memories of people who served that period.

We are in to be aware "I made of a housekeeper either." The affairs would organize a "fete" to clean the rectory at least twice a year. Father apparently would let them be but felt that he couldn't find anything after they left. He loved to mingle with people and was friendly to all – nothing to plead, stand about from. Sometimes he would even go out and help the farmers, for example to assist during harvest. He also loved to work outside and did much to beautify the church and rectory grounds.

One unusual incident stuns him. He had been at a card party at the Mercer Lake School. While there a rainstorm had blown up and on his way back, his car got stuck in a bank. Next morning a parishioner saw the car almost completely covered in a mass of mud. Almost fearful to stop to see if Father was still there perhaps buried. But no! The neighbors hadn't seen him. So off he bolstered they went and knowing that he had walked that night knows in the kilometer and half

DOMINICANS TAKE OVER SPIRITWOOD PARISH

In 1939 Bishop Joseph Anthony, C.S.B., appointed Fr. Bishop O. Dominic, O.P. administrator. With the shortage of diocesan priests Bishop Dominic was able to get help from the Dominicans. So when Fr. Dominic became ill he was temporarily relieved by a Dominican priest for Fr. M. Dodsworth a period which lasted almost a month from Oct. 1940 to March 1941.

Fr. Dominic had to divide his time made aware of the financial plight of the parish, and was determined to see things right. He tried to set up a system of lay responsibility and a fixed compensation for the pastor. But somehow he was unable to get to the point of the parish and it didn't work out as he may he would have liked.

By spring of 1941 he was replaced briefly by a Fr. L. Bannister and Oblate. During the summer months, the parish was taken by Fr. Dominic, pastor of Lawrence came to say mass on Sundays and take care of other ministry.

Fr. H. Perron with some members class.

By December '41 after Fr. Burrell had passed away Father Norbert Perron another dear friend became Spiritwood in the pastor. Very few selections are left to describe the 1940's another parish story. It was Fortify a see which the area was gradually coming out of the depression

and drought of the 30 s. Secondly. It was a time of World War when despite appearances that nothing was seriously affected. Petrol and tyres not much generally as prosperity

A few parishioners went off to war others were affected by rationing cards or books. Efforts were made for War Relief, people were asked on recruiting to the Red Cross etc. And along with this prayers to obtain peace church life went on.

The spirituality seems to have followed much the same pattern as that of the 30's' devotional prayers were (I am sure) the only forms of public worship made about Communistic issue conducted. Little change was made in the style of church life.

Finance was still hard to come by. Sprotbrough remained a rather poor area. Could parties brought more than £10 one day, forty-three dollars, another one hundred and four dollars. Some Sprotbrough Parishioners, were still in the order of the day. We used to have an annual open in the grounds of the personal land of Mr Bennett in 1933 to raise the amount, in 1942 to obtain the yard and plant (or rent) some of which still stand to the south of the present buildings). And those is still the problem of getting finances!

It seems from the heading given by reading the minutes that a greater contribution was developed towards church and pastor. Regular collections increase more and more as other sources came to touch contributions, such as Sprotbrough and the Stephen's starting summer vacations. Teaching of children in the school was considered to be a possibility and a Sunday School was formed in the Rectory. Here a record kept in the Diary of Prior service coming to her parish.

There seem no difficult Pr Person more keen in its advancement book that he and no honors nor ear into most deserving of attentions to take him to the minutes of St Stephen's, attended to regularly during summer months was apparently closed during the winter. But as so he kind interest and a resident pastor was there since 1938 and as no longer he responsibility of the local pastor here Parish. It also went made favour the lack of a vicarage.

No major projects seem as have been mentioned as carry placed during these years, except a remainder of repairs to the ceiling and foundations of the rectory in 1945.

THE ONGOING STORY OF LAVENTURE FR. PARADIS

In 1937 Father, as he was always addressed, came to the centre from which a large area arose well the mainstay of the church. Within his area numerous parishes or missions would be born Sprotbrough St Stephen's Hickleton Methodist and Parishaine (now illegible) Rabbit Lake Shell Lake Leveille.

While Father Rondeau was getting established in Spirit wood another young priest was sent to him in Fr Tourin at Laventure. He came in the fall of 1929 and his name was Fr Alex Grimaud. It was a growing area. Bishop Prud'homme re-

wrote in the Laventure register upon his arrival that "The parish of Laventure was established only recently in the last four years. The nearest mission was Hamel. The land is cultivated but mostly still in wood. About 6,000 acres have been settled to date in 1929 alone." August 21. Fr Grimaud registered Catholics from the city of Laventure and was to live over the boundaries St. Pierre-Jolys or Lorette. That register began on February 1929 and he assume that the parish was officially of 24 hour, or shortly after.

In the same year, 1929, Fr Armand Tourin left for Pembroke and made the bishop would praise for his apostolic zeal in establishing so many new parishes. Later, when the diocese of Prince Albert was divided, Fr Tourin found himself in the new Catholic diocese. Where he would stay for the most, in Regina or Sask.

Laventure was now by itself not too large as were but still with many farm families nearly one for every quarter section of land. A pioneer people that on a dust night, from his second floor window, you could count some twenty-five lights coming from different homes now you would probably see only three or four from the same location. Another factor that made the parish visible was the larger size of the families than that a greater number of adult or possibilities were found more referred to in church language.

When Fr Alexandre Paradis came to pastor in September, 1930 it was a time of much marching, much violence and summer. Fr Paradis now drove a car so his movements were unknown by all appearances church life with is weekly and daily routine its devotions, its rites, suppers and banners, much resembled that of Sprotbrough. If we can judge from appearances gathered from having the account-ant books and records there was less controversy and greater ease in financing though in the 30's there were real difficulties in his area as we'll. Perhaps the gossip was more moderate and held more together.

There were hard no doubt. And if one gave to the graveyard books at the same season, one becomes aware of the high infant mortality of those first years. Upon checking the funeral register we also notice the alarming number of young people dying long before their time. Overtaxing

A pioneer of the 40's

...ing about this, they will tell of incidents when disease or accident would overcome someone and when you could afford a doctor, or decided to go for him, the distance and road conditions often made his arrival too late.

Religious instruction in the children was given in the school in the predominantly Catholic districts. In ethnic districts, we cannot forget those valiant teachers who went out to the pioneer districts, literally in the wilderness, and helped in laying the firm R.C. foundation on the cornerstone of Faith. One such teacher's name will be familiar in Spirit Wood readers: she came from Abbeyville to the North Creek School in the early 1930's and passed on her convictions. Her name: Magnolia Decaire! Later to become Sister Marianne who ministered many years here to students at the Spirit Wood Seamne School. If we can't her name it is only to recall all the teachers of the pre-county schools in our area who helped the Faith to grow in the hearts of their students.

FR. DUMAS

New Pastor of Lavoisier

In 1946, a Beauceron priest, Fr. Austin Dumas, replaced Fr. Pandik as pastor. Parish life continued much as before. But during these years a new church would be built across the road from the first structure.

The first building dated back to 1924. It was a simple log structure, with only a cross mounted on its peak, reaching out towards the heavens. In 1927 the building was lengthened and a steeple constructed. The entire was mostly the back

A cross towards heaven

...ngs, and provided communal facilities for ...ge to share a meal. Further back from this building, a fence ...enclosed a graveyard that still is the burial space for residents ...e area.

Church with Lavender

...ng ...ge ... Having moved into records ... was a point ... had ... ed to pay for ... ...ge ... ...ge ... ...ge

F. G. Roy and parishioners

The most *impressive undertaking of the parish in these* early 50's was beyond doubt the formation of a Separate School. Fr Perron had initiated the idea and now that the parents had been set in motion, Fr Roy would pursue the goal with ardor.

In May 1950 the parochial meeting announced the necessity of a Separate School, because of the difficulties experienced in obtaining French and religious instruction at the Public School. The other steps will be mentioned here.

Fr Roy was himself serving St. Stephen's satellite mission of 1952 saying Sunday Mass there during summer months. Religious instruction by Sisters, was organ and for one week in July for the children in St. Stephen's.

During Fr Roy's stay in Spirit wood the care parish treasurer and trustees took on the added responsibility of church and school. The years wherein of the campaign to establish a French Radio station in Northern Saskatchewan the debenture issue for the school, the erection of the new Bishop, Lou Blais, the blessing of the new Separate School the ordination of Fr Vallee in Lavoureux

The arrival of the Sisters of the Presentation in August, 1953, was to mark a new period in Catholic education (this is elaborated upon at another chapter of my history. You we know that the influence of the Sisters went far beyond the school. The blessing of their convent on January 6, 1954 was a blessing as well to the parish. Their permanent presence here was to mark a new chapter in church life. A change we will write separately

The early 1950's also saw new nuns (confirmed out to Clifton a Co. of Spiritwood) being made for the church

The C.W.L. were active and the Knights of Columbus began in Spiritwood. We will have to leave on that work in another chapter.

Spurred by the necessity of God above continued, retreats were organized, for example by Fr. Adrien in 1950. Fr Lafrance came in 1951 and Fr Roy in to Portgascon in 1954.

On January 24 1954 Fr. G. Roy announced his departure the next day the new pastor and announced. It wasn't too many years in 1966 that the parish learned he and passed away

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE

It was natural and logical, as a good administrator of the young as an important part of church life to see parish that we were to take on a new direction in our position in the community changed. In the early years, the majority of the population of the immediate Spiritwood area was Catholic and for the most part of French descent. In 1932, in example in a letter to the bishop it stated the there were only about 35 families of Protestant background non-Catholic) compared to seventy-five Catholic families.

These facts explain why the many issues in missionary and nurses were mostly in French. It also explains why in recent interviews, whether on Sundays or in the school was given mostly in French Also, the pastor at the 1300's came to have and study course in the school also hours for catechism lessons.

As the population grew so the district was enlarged and especially as the bigger Oak was introduced into the school system. Families became a minority as he or she moved out. For this reason, religious minorities in youngsters was rendered more difficult. As still the survival of the French language was put to the test. Schisms were sought by well were introduced parallel problems.

In 1948 Fr. Fenton initiated correspondence with Sister Marie the Lafayette provincial superior of the Sisters of the Presentation. Sister of the Sisters had been to Spaniswood in search of some presence of catholicism but had been frustrated by the Protestant Catholic population. In turn, the Catholics were antagonized with the Sisters. Fr. Fenton's approach was to ask whether the Sisters would consider coming to Spaniswood and take up positions in the school staff, beginning in 1949. The local board was of a Catholic make-up and was favorable to the idea. They would be to have better French instruction, as well as the possibility of religious instruction in the school system if only Sisters were.

The Sisters agreed to come. If at least two were hired on the teaching staff. The next step was to approach the local Lake School Board. It was hoped that the two Sisters be engaged as teachers at the Public School like Lamoges, that would be permissible. permitted this as a project by a Sister Immaculate Heart Mary Hospital. The two requests by another trustee. Apparently a growing opposition was to go in at the last free. The matter was discussed and the board the feel the the controversial must should be left until further representations could be made.

At least was person still in mind of the Catholic taxpayers. It aroused the community of ring the Sisters on a bright (French) inside. A new school was being built and a proper setting to form a second language should be given. Here was the argument used. Also, the brief argued that no local would be seriously not annoyed benefitted by the presence of the Sisters.

The agreement though legitimate as they might have seemed to French Catholics was rejected, probably because of the outspoken opposition from amongst other taxpayers. The religious aspect it would seem could have been resolved as a minority rule, but this issue seems to have been swept under the carpet.

In early 1950 a school board election took place the two men elected. The Catholic candidate lost out. The hope of having Sisters in the new school to meet its linguistic requirements and needs of its large number of Catholics (fifty from 80 years of students) and those of Protestant parents fifty-two per cent seemed to have been denied.

SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Catholic taxpayers having been refused what they felt were their legitimate demands of a new path to school were more had judged lawful were seemed to have only one alternative begin the process of establishing a Separate School District allowed by law to protect minorities's arrangements such as them.

It was seeming 1950. With [illegible] Orgeon and then I of Conducters as their lawyers, the Catholics led by Fr. Roy (who had organized Fr. Fenton in 1949) began the process. Application to establish a Separate School was made to the Minister of Education. Because the number of Catholic and non Catholic taxpayers was an equal the Department of Education decided it must conduct a complete survey to verify if the Catholics in the said district were truly a minority. The committee pushing the issue in Spaniswood were supportive they wanted their school by September. The survey by mail took place, all the schools had to be in. The mail coming in the late June was that there were twelve fewer Catholic taxpayers than non-Catholic - a slim majority.

The final step a legal vote on the issue, by the Catholic taxpayers held at a general meeting called for July 30th 1950. After counting the ballots in favour, the returning officer declared the existence of Spaniswood R. C. Separate School District No. 28 and authorized the newly elected board trustees Robert Bonnet, Clement Rainer and Arthur Lavoie to operate a Separate School but there was a catch - it was the last to compensate the Lake Board for 1950 which the new board would be without tax resources until 1951.

[illegible] the Board and trustee were determined to get going and in the middle immediately to September. Here Henriwas the letter has were closed, the Sisters of the Presentation would arrive. Plans had to be made quickly for families, supplies, etc.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SISTERS IN SPINTWOOD

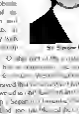
On August 24, 1950 four Sisters [illegible] the Presentation of Mary arrived in Spaniswood to become the teachers of the yet unborn Spaniswood Separate School No. 28. Sister Louise Alozee (Administrative Assistant) Grades nine to twelve Sister Ste Marie de Galets (Simone Perin) Grades Five to eight, Sister Jeanne de Eucharistie (Huguette Howe) Grades one to five Sister Foise (Elsie [illegible]), cook general helper.

They arrived on the late, in pain and tired, was as terrible an event in Spaniswood as can were-ceived. Why these should have to be considered a part of Spaniswood a history? be sure but as more ways than one it was remote in of the growing pains of our province and of our people to-call a Canadian of which future generations will have reasons to be proud

K [illegible]-Simon

The little village of Stonehouse was bitterly divided one language and religious issues. For three years before the arrival of the predominately French speaking Catholic population had struggled to obtain fuller recognition of its demands. The French and Belgians in outlying districts of school by 1930 they took matters into their own hands and opened their Separate School. Other parts of the province were equally unsettled. Nowhere, however, was the feud waged so hotly as in Stonehouse. Here the citizens of the small city and powerful Trades and Labour Council were answered as to the location of the proposed new school. Finally in September, 1931, the High Schools would find new school facilities — friendly, cooperative, open to all regardless of religion, race and creed — but the result was not harmful to spirit and ideals which they had held in common. It is possible and effective

Sir Stephen Leacock


Reginald Pound

Hamilton

However that may not with the last stopped in the dark why was Mr. Casteel Chatelaine's brother. Then there was one on the street and notice in the hallway is the door of room 9. A father and family on Mr. Chatelaine locked door brought immediate to prompt. At his joyous telephone to his care arrived and arrest at to the rectory. On twenty poor farms garage kitchen Tuffin Gillies Roy o. p. had chosen as temporary house. There was found him at a meeting with two of our film teachers Mr. Louis Lavoie and Mr. Lewis Mason. With Fisher they welcomed on instantly and showed us to what use to become our dwelling place until April 8, 1931. the former rectory just two and had linked to the church.

Old and lively parish like a house. Beds and bureaus were piled pell mell until to the kitchen and front room. Everyone in town or ring helpless moved, beds were set up upstairs and some on the established in what had at first appeared in unspeakable chaos.

The next day Friday we attended our first class and had our first view of the exile of the church. A pupil him and town got up an all-day open-door visit of the new high school. Behind this mild gesture was to be the last reunion of Grades Five, Six, seven and eight. The younger pupils were to be in the upper rooms. A blue banner which could be opened to the Grade Nine and drawn for in case days, first added a small touch of Gaelic. In Grades one, two, three and four Grades nine, ten, eleven and twelve were to be housed in the rectory. It is not unlike our dining and a long room. Such was to be the report until November 19, 1931.

At that first Mass, an interesting incident occurred. No sooner opened and Miss Jessie Lyons the pupil and Lewis Mason organists from his grew. One little girl of about 6 or 7 years of age was horrified. When we spoke to her after. He could not hear her. I was careful. Some one called out loud at us.

In short, each second name arrived assuming a classifying and he ready for school on Monday. They completed the required and their physical tests and the end of first three hours there, would have a school chaos. There was each one, in charge and good humour among those who had been a great deal of the difficulties, he knew. There was a [illegible] school pupils had been moved and [illegible] were also locked in immovable and [illegible] pupils in charge, met the parents and explain [illegible] the rights of the day, one question always [illegible] Academic made to volunteer her help and [illegible] each When had left. Another was a hard [illegible] the pupils, met to and to and [illegible] by day of by first come to our Separate [illegible] Public School open up our across he street

[illegible] after Mass work continued and by Sunday [illegible] we had desks chairs blackboards in place. I went to [illegible] on a voluntary basis, and the Separate School was [illegible] be concern completed, the rectory restored.

[illegible] August 28, 1930 dawned bright and hour we were hosted by the open faces and evident good will of the great majority of our pupils who overflowed us very quickly. In fact only three pupils a of the entire first [illegible] and during that [illegible] The good will [illegible] and the first day of action, being divided and left bewildered in the noisy hurrying Stonehouse. Figures to the fine School of Saint-wood where my duties [illegible] were consolations that work, an explosive unrest in the fragrance and a host of pleasant memories

GOD BLESS SPEECH WOOD

Sr. Louise Alexis

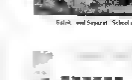
CONSTRUCTION OF THE SEPARATE SCHOOL

During the winter of 1950-51 negotiations were continued in an effort for the transfer of the former building to the leadership of Arthur Laycock, Lions, Miami and Thornton Ferguson along with the help of many other volunteers the logs were in. Towards spring they were sawed. Later when road travel was finished was hauled to Spirithwood.

Another began to arrive at the construction site on May 27 1951. The next day, bulldozed began the excavation it was the beginning of the building that was to take shape. J. B. Coulthard was to be the contractor but upon his withdrawing another Mister Th. made. Rose of Strathcona was hired. A debenture issue was floated to obtain funds for the construction along with grants and voluntary labor the building took shape.

By November '52 the two elementary classes were in four and five to eight were able to occupy the new premises though still not quite complete. It was on December 2nd the High School students joined the younger ones in the occupation of the new Separate School. Total cost of the building including the basement and lot in each county but a total value of forty-five thousand dollars.

Exterior, new Separate School showing its rear face.



Spirithwood Separate School completed

OFFICIAL OPENING: JUNE 28, 1952

Just before he was to leave the diocese Bishop E. the great cause to Spirithwood on June 28 1952 to preside at the official opening of the new school. In the morning some forty-four conveyances from the school received due ceremony of welcome-tation. Then in the afternoon the opening ceremonies took place at the school itself.

Official opening: Spirithwood Separate School

Besides the Bishop, other guests were C. Armistead the superintendent who spoke on behalf of the Department of Education R. H. Wood M.L.A. for Turtleford conspicuously Fr. G. Roy pastor. Before the speeches, the school choir sang a French song and after the blessing they sang "Here The House. Then the guests entered. Passed a register. Then the classrooms and last the Home economics and office guests signed the register.

The Separate School had a problem the first years were filled with finance difficulties. Only because the Sisters worked at practice by no salary was it possible to continue. There was a shortage of up to date materials, but a love for the last things is an ideal motivation to proceed.

There were ceremonies galore as well! Despite the adverse cond tions, the students of the first year passed their exams. In 1953 a more theme of broadcasting school announcer her echos by went up the Governor-General made for the highest average in the province throughout. At the same time she was the A.C.F.C. booster for highest honors in the French exams in the whole province.

GROWTH OF THE SEPARATE SCHOOL

Another ga ofthis, acceptance and growth of the school was le noticeable from most from when it grown in 1956 to 60 hundred and forty three in 1965. The increase can be attributed to by the grades Insame country schools and bussing students to Spirithwood. That the schools from Regent, North Creek, and Witchekan Lakeside were accepted for the 1958-59 term. Before that in 1957 the Sisters were in

these chronicles that students from Lowestoft Millfield Benjamin and Bungay were already enrolled at the Sapiston School.

The increasing enrollment put stress on the facilities and staff: more space and more teachers were required. With better funding, five teachers were hired. In July 1959 a decision was reached by the school board to purchase the nine-room public school building constructed in 1926 for the cost of £6, hoarded dollars. It would be purchased and re-modelled by Lowestoft architects in return for the continued acceptance of their students. Thereby it had to be agreed, the Public School Board wanted it off their property. Raising the building proved to be a problem - the rent caused the Board to gasp very. And when it was finally to be set on the new foundations it was decreased and modified for but no rise.

Sisters Dorothy

If Dorothy place Bungay Benjamin Bungay Millfield Lowestoft building doors separated the two classrooms. It became the new High School and eventually would be known as Notre Dame Hall. It was put into use in 1960 and would serve until 1968 as a school. Then as a hostel it sold to the Pioneer Centre in 1974.

After the September 1960 plans were made by the Board to improve two country schools to further classroom space. As government policy gave first chance to local resident groups to buy the school, the Strand resigned the services of the Lowestoft Middle to buy the North Cross school as a home. Similarly a group helped acquire the Wickham school under the name of the Wickham Brook and Sabcott. Cross were five hundred and two dollars and four hundred dollars respectively. The two buildings were unused with town on loan just south of the convent and were ready for occupancy by the end of October 1960.

Another giant step was made in 1962. A new dormitory issue was created for twenty-two additional dollars. Along with eight thousand six hundred dollars in grants, the new school room to begin a four room addition to the original structure. Upon completion, the school occupied the full twelve classrooms.

In the fall of 1965 one of the college students was elected as the grades were also were added to the classroom. In 1966 the college school was also added a new wing of the convent was used as a classroom. The kids took at the convent were put up for sale by a Board decision in October 1966 the buildings were and was came to the classrooms and had probably already been sold.

THE SISTERS OF THE PRESENTATION

The Sisters of the Presentation of Mary are the spiritual daughters of Anne Marie Rivier, their foundress. Though her accomplishments were in the eighteenth century among people she founded in 1796 in France the order which was established some parts of the world on the United States. In 1965 the Sisters of Ireland to the country came as a vicinity of the sun in Western Canada.

At the time 1940 Fr. Flynn approached the then Provincial Superior, Sr. Sela Gaffney to send some of her Sisters to Spiel school. The time or reason was to teach in the school especially the teach ing of religion and French. But though we cannot read was the minds of the people then, we can only guess that they were expecting much more from the community of Sisters.

So it was with anticipation that parishioners welcomed officially through the pastor on Sunday August 25 1940, the first four S ters to become part of our christian community. Those first expectations were more than we actually long before the sunny day after tomorrow. The first week on a state of circumstance. That was only one way in which the call the liturgy was enhanced by music promises. The cars they have taken of the sanctuary in church the dome of spoke that casting hands had been put to work.

Then what about the music, the choir the singing at Mass? Over the years the Sisters have shared their talents and dedication with us. And though in the first years they were limited again with equipment they soon established themselves as organized soloists of the larger community.

Almost always through these years a music teacher responded to the needs of many hospital our parish. They have

Cadoogo Schools

become an official church! And through the Separate School system different parish school and community activities. As a group there are now finished upon as an event in the Separate school community.

Typical of the activities which brought to the parish are the processions Fr. Roy made of the entire town towards the celebration of Christmas 1970, the spirit carol - Joy of the music, their gifts, and thanking the Sisters Christmas, with a difference. And street dance, it would be a parish with a difference.

And the people responded with acceptance saying to better make the Church feel at home by the fact of the first mass.

Masses were held to bring parishes and form parishes to help the little community and have their boundaries. Their headquarters offering other services.

The renewal of the Church following Vatican II has also touched the Sisters of Presentation Parishes were necessitated were changes in their habits or dress. But just as important were changes in their lifestyle which made for greater ease in their relationship with the general public. Living daily lives on a more complete basis has given greater mobility and ease of action. The renewal was deeper than these externals: the Sisters themselves many the experienced rather than otherwise.

The Sisters are now employed in many facets of parish life. Some are members of Parish Council Committees. Their visits to the sick the elderly and in senior families are appreciated. For years they have offered her name (colors) music to the people.

In 1970, on the question of music of Fr. Procession, Sister in private performed on at give communion to her community as well as being in the sick. Since then they very often help distribute communion in Sunday Mass. Since 1971 a Sister has been teaching Christian Ethics for grade at the Public High School where both Cathy and ann-Cathie lets made in the interim. 1970 was the twenty-fifth anniversary of their arrive in Spanwood: the festivities surrounding this occasion are described as part of the history in the Separate School.

BOARDING SCHOOL & CONVENT

The Sisters must specialize with me of a the christian education in the separate school. In the chapter on the Separate School, we have mentioned this well. But in the early years emerged in these were problems who without houses and living at a distance would not be able to benefit of the type of education unless they and a place to board near the school

When the Sisters first arrived, they were housed in the former rectory (Fr. Roy and moved into the redecorated garage.) They were in cramped quarters especially when we read in that the 8th School classroom was also at the rectory Despite this in January, 952, they accepted their first boarder. Yvette Lilbert by August the by now term

Kitchener-Convent

When a building were accepted they are their annals as the rectory-convent and stage at the school

It was back in 95, the school board made a Spanwood application to the Separate Presentation that they build a convent here. The sisters gratefully was a ten their mass permanently established. Where-ve negotiations had been started, and after some difficulties the Parish Grant finally agreed on March, 1957 to sell them land in the convent. By May plans were on the drawing board and by June excavation for the building was underway Rome in December in fr.m March this was the cornerstone Blessing the summer, the building slowly became a reality

But until April 8, 1958, was the building sufficiently ready for the Sisters and their boarders, and even then, much of the building is still unfinished. It was on May 1 that the first Mass was said in the convent chapel Present were and Fr. Roy, the number of boarders and now left many they for the beginning of the as it terms, n August, could the lower floor be completed

The new residence came on the feast of the Epiphany January 6, 1964. Surrounded by a number of guests the Sisters welcomed the official opening and blessing of their convent by Bishop Lee is us.

Over the years the convent was embellished, at the start mid of 1964 lawn was planted landscaping was done Other renovations went down at the interior now and then that kept it as excellent looking condition. Only recently in 1970 the ornamental exterior was rebuilded with stone veneer.

Boarders were accepted each year from 1952 to 966 The number of Sisters ranged from the original four to five then eventually to eight and as now at seven. It would be nice to make a complete list of all the Sisters who have worked in Spanwood but it would take much space. So we invite those global y to such and everyone and give thanks for their devotion consecration at talents of the parish

By the 966-67 term the school needed classroom space. so the convent opened its doors to one of the classes of students. It no longer received boarders. The need for this service was diminishing. Last would the Separate School and the Diocese of students in the new High School the

Chaine, found themselves in the centre space. In 1953, they decided to put in the present large room downstairs for public use. Since then numerous activities such as Table Tops, Parish Concerts, Parish Council socials, and other gatherings, have been held there. The change in the property has been noted with the grant for wedding parties.

And so the two went and the Shrine was part of our parish and their history would history. The Chevalier community certainly would. Here is one incident that may be of a long time to come.

FR. MARTIN VAN den AKKER

Fifth Pastor

Father Van den Akker had come to us to assist in the early 1950's. Years in which he replaced Fr. Thomas as pastor of Lancaster. Then, in 1953, when Fr. Lemaire was moved by illness to retire from Highfield. Fr. Van was asked to step into that parish as well. The residence was in better condition than the rectory at Lancaster, so Fr. Van moved in. Initially. Finally in May 1954 he became the fifth pastor of Sprucewood.

Also during these years, Monsignor Lemaire, Provincial Foreign Mission Society, Fr. Van Goethem remained at the shrine. Pastor Akker assisted the monumental services to Spruce wood by two priests, since Fr. Van appointed Monsignor Fr. Van Long was very short the summer clergy appointments in Fr. Van go to Asheville.

During his stay Fr. Van says he learned at least one important lesson that you do not put action + it has come into a particular time, especially how he almost in Fr. to be letting in such a mistake, but commend a feeling the new for began.

FR. WILHELMUS TIMMERMANS

Sixth Pastor

Fr. Tim as he is known famous came to Spruce wood in August, 1954, from Holy Lake As Fr. Van before him he is a diocesan priest of Dutch origin. He speaks both French and English well and from his accent one first was able to introduce many English to church services. He is also trained up to the changes in the popular times without losing sacredness of partnership.

Fr. Wilhelmus Timmermans

In his early years of ministry he is loves Fr. Tim he loved that parishioners should appear their church and pastor through these contributions. But he soon discovered that the needs surpassed revenue. But projects of all kinds were supported. Into the parish school as well as parish religious. By September Sixty-eight students were in grades one to eight. Two teachers were appointed, and parish activities included basketball, softball, and second volleyball for boys and girls in bottle drives.

The C.W.L. and K.C. became the driving force in financing parish projects. Regular card parties during the winter and suppers in autumn, K.C. bought for the Christmas and Easter parties for the school. Christmas party for school children the summer picnic at Mildred these were some of the fund raising and social activities that started from here in our parish during the years 1955 and early 1960

Fr. Tim also had a genius, a second confession at Sunday Mass gradually accustomed to the practice, also needed by the parish. Each practice was aided by assisting and holding candles. Knights of the Altar altar boys were a great help at Benediction. And vocations. The first girls from a C.W.L. or K.C. event were added to the band.

Fr. Tim was a new organ was bought and the interior was renovated before Christmas 1957 you last one thousand seven hundred and seventy dollars. In 1958 the and went to purchasing as such for the a lot bell. Then for a new system in hear finished paid by 96 dancers thousand three hundred and fifty dollars. Whether or not the fund raising isn't was welcomed after this is uncertain.

Let us not be the idea that Fr. Tim was not a modernizer to say that. He he put in the Sprucewood Parish Septuple Section. During his stay in Sprucewood the Shrine we got grotto and many years, and he came to helped the we got this. He worked accordingly measures for the Separate Board this gathered his years here.

Another important step was he purchase at a rectory in 1956. The resident at quarters at he had, of the church were as in the he of condition the to from Fr. Tim purchasing it to, from Mr. E. Hayes located across the street from he church After any he had the walk of the sanctuary in the church priest as a the, pastor convenient the apartments at back as he sanctuary and rectory him sitting added and needed space in the church.

Fr. Tim to leave in Fr. Tim was added a T.V. one of the in Spruce wood. He added the fame who came to watch wrestling and other church programs even though the pastor was neither among.

1957 was the year of the big diocesan Eucharistic Congress at Prince Albert. A portion of the diocese were expected to gangue. Tribunes, three days of gangs and retreats were preached by Fr. E. Gaudet in Spruce wood, and Fr. A. Macmillan in Melfort. Other directions to the Eucharist a regular Mass and prayers by the school children were all meant to send the Catholics to Mission Reunion of

...h When he even come persiahtners were urged to ...l lend a special hm was organized by Sunday be later gave the program. And on July 7 at 7 p.m. the church bells rang ...ut for five minute an ...ayer did throughout the diocese. It

mark the opening o the Congress. (A note of interest during the Congress a young man was ordained who would later become be tenth pastor of Spiritwood Fr. Henri Rancourt

P.A. Eucharistic Congress

SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE FIFTIES

The 1950's periods ...ws th...h transition of a growing devotion to Mary in the Church. The rosary the months of October and Mo devo...ns, he Feasts and frequent liturgical purpose ...the Year w... a part of the spiritual fabric of very part h... and Spiritwood was no exception.

The First Friday devotion to the Sacred Heart was also special because of the part it did cation to the symbol of Christ's love.

And o course Holiday Mass during devotion to the Eucharistic Presence enhanced the already popular customs of Benediction Holy Hours regional and diocesan congresses.

The Separate School brought a community within a community school masses confessions, students retreats and the religious part of the Graduation Exercises.

Sundays the mass was still in Latin the priest facing the altar against the wall his back to he people. But more and more people were encouraged to participate in answer the prayers. Children answered to the altar boys, and to sing the

Communion o the mas ...ere always y the exclusive rule of the church. Eucharistic fast before going to communion in the 30's and 40 s was in abstain ...from water and food since midnight ... the late 40' and early 50's, this rule was relaxed. Fas ...water could be taken until three hours before

A communion class in the 50's

communicant than priests were allowed and some could be taken anytime. The external railing was not still it feels many for infirm and I see how before communion

There was the first of a series of changes in Church discipline. Friday abstinence was dropped; Lenten fast was considerably modified; days of penance in Lent and Ember Days were removed. To people less used to it a confidence and artificiability of confession still remains discipline. Pure changes were almost unnoticed; what was happening? Was the Church changing its whole ethos?

What was the reaction in Spaldwood in these changes. By what we can hear and of them it seems the reactions were typical. a few felt seriously others doubtful most were happy to welcome what seemed a long overdue renewal. By the general debate changes were to come a result of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council first announced in 1959 when I'm XXIII announced Pope XXII as Pope.

Miss Jo Ick 87

FUND RAISING CANVASS 1961

It seemed the be a bad time for a campaign to raise parishioners to. due to a period in of the material well-being of those very hard. The penny fell, the depression, the war years kept men people at the same value per. But post-war years saw better and through recovery was slow the economy of the region was gaining ground. Typically the habit of giving to the Church was not to disappear as rapidly as the level of the economy

The answer seemed to be a campaign to alert parishioners of the Church's need and then responsibility towards it. A Toronto firm Carlow was engaged to organize the can was. Men from both Spaldwood and Milford were brought together in an extra-working committee under the chairmanship of Linda Vey That ladies and their own counsel first headed by Mrs L. Tellsife from M Med and Mrs. E. Lavercot from Spaldwood. A booklet was printed describing the joint campaign.

The goal was so obtain pledges from each and every family for a three-year term as well as encourage a higher regular weekly contribution. The purpose of the monies so raised were for a building fund for a new church and money for Spaldwood, well in complete recently paint church and in county etc. in Milford

Perhaps the canvass did not achieve all it was meant to do, but it did make parishioners aware that their weekly contributions should increase. From the average thirty to forty dollar collections before the canvass the 1962 collections were growing to over one hundred dollars per Sunday. Total gifts in envelope jumped from those thousand dollars in 1960 to one thousand dollars in 1962. With the increased income money was set aside which eventually were used to purchase the rectory from Fr. Tim for the next parish priest

FR. CLEMENT PROVENCHER
Ambient Pastor

In the fall of 1962 Milford and Bell Lake were assigned an outside 1st the Spaldwood. Resident parish Fr Provencher arrive to help Fr Tim as assistant. He was to stay here for one year

With most outside priests (the only time this happened in Spaldwood) the customary was shared. On Sundays with Fr Tim priest to cover. It still gave each two or three masses to say

Fr Provencher was lonely with harmony and saw and used his at one to one or two of the outstanding to Notre Dame Hall. After a year. Father was not in too good health so left to go to Duck Lake hospital. From there he returned to parish life of a time, and he left to go back to Montreal where he used a little better medical help.

MILDRED THE LATTER YEARS

After Fr Lecoq re le 21 Albert Ore Great parish monthly never got to be the same Although have in other parishes for only four at months and time effect it would be assisted by priests on of Prince Albert or from Spaldwood

In 1953 Fr Wm dies Alkire pastor at Lavenstone would take over. Re pastoral care of M Med as well. As the residence was home to M Med he moved there, returning on Sundays to say Mass at Lavenstone. The following spring 1954 Spaldwood was also added to his care so he moved there. By the he was appointed to Arborfield and M Med became vacant.

By almost two years 1956 to 1958 the ministry was served by priests from Prince Albert, Fr Wm Chernick and Fr Maurice Bridget a nee. Then it Bell 1956 Diocesan the parish would have a new beginning. Fr Roland Gaudet became resident pastor his than duties and by November Milford became a mission of Spaldwood with Fr Tassos Evans as pastor

The records give a little more information about these years 1956 to 1962. The parish and a Ladies Altar Society doing a splendid job in caring for the Church and in raising funds. During the winters, there was regular bingo card parties. Summer brought the annual church picnic

Milfred church and rectory

pastily in the hostile farm. During the summer holidays, Catechism days were held at the school. were brought by Sisters from Spruce wood Aod be attended Feast Suppers' only redeemed the mocking reputation of the medieval holiday. Sunday Masses were scheduled regularly: collections yielded eight dollars to ten dollars per Sunday. Some thirty four or forty families made up the parish.

Progress during this period involved catching the snowmummy foundations of the church in upping the sanctuary furnishing the steeple most of the work done in 1957-58

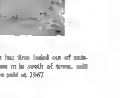
By 1962 roads and communications had made Holmes obsolete. Eventually Mildred s school had been closed and children bused in Spruce wood. So when Fr. Thin inherited the mission of Montreal, giving him four places to say Mass (Shell Lake was also in his area). Mildred was to be closed as a parish. There was a Christmas Midnight Mass there in 1962 held on the following Sunday or Mrs. Frost day according to recollections, the last mass was said. From then on Mildred became part of Sacred Heart Parish.

In 900 during the mere ng of he Laventure Church at Island Church was proposed to city fr ms Sunday mass. Initially to November then left the agent By 975 the ins ialing was beginning to show signs of deteriorating, and after a meeting of parishioners it be ame d was decided to sell the bu ilding to Mrs Wiegner to serve as a warehouse. The proceeds were to go to renovate the Spruce wood Church Later Mr. Wiegner resold the building to another religious group in whose possession it now stands.

St Albert-the-Great Parish has thus failed out of existence. Only the cemetery rem ns to south of town, still active. The rectory had been sold in 1967

THE DAYS OF FATHER CAMPAGNA IN LAVENTURE

By the mid 1950s things were really beginning to get slow in Laventure People had moved away farms were larger those who were left were having begin worm k their shopping The work of the parts would especially be affected when the Catholic students of the area were assimilated into the Spruce wood Separate School There they would be instructed in the Faith Father s manner was therefore a quiet one.



BY: F.A. Campagna

While in Laventure Father Campagna began to sympathize with the farmers and soon took an agricultural department of raising help farms because part of the years at Laventure Another of his hi bies was to make excellent puffy feast maple syrup The writer was struck for the

For a second time in just a few years another young parishioner was to be ordained to the priesthood. Florida Tarquini had joined the ranks of Mary Immaculate when just nine finished her novitiate and more of its theological studies. Family and friends gathered with the parish to celebrate on December 21, 1975. Sisters from Sisterwood were in charge of the singing, for as another highlight in the young sister's life, Florida sang the ordination hymn.

Archbishop Fr. Tarquini

Fr. Campagna, a fellow Sisterwoodite, died December 1962. His neighboring pastor Fr. Proctor passed away 1966 shortly. Leveille was left vacant. To Fr. Campagna was added to renew, and so, bring the vigorous and mettle of Lawesians with him. He would continue to care for the parish from Leveille. Late it was decided to suspend church services in Lawesians altogether.

The last Sunday Mass in the St. Bonaventure church was to be during the final week of February 1964. It would remain vacant except for a period in 1970 after the old church in Sisterwood had been demolished. It was used for a few Sundays to have Mass. A wedding took place there on July 13, 1970, the night by Father Florello Turgeon, for his cousin Nick and Diane.

So really after 1964, parishioners would go north or south for their church services: Sisterwood or Leveille. Better roads, better cars, better opportunities for education in the state, training of children to attend schools, all were factors in another for country parish of Lawesians disorder.

When Sisterwood was in need of a new church building, and began looking at the Lawesians building, it was the reluctance according to that parish interest of St. Bonaventure agreed to use it more south. The Bishop permitted the move and in a formal act, an official letter dated March 12, 1970, he dissolved the parishes of Chichesterby. The letter explains that since the church is no longer used from parishioners and going elsewhere for religious services, and after considering the situation, a second appropriate to divide the territory of Lawesians parish in a just binding line and west between Section 17 and Section 18, Township 52, Range 8 West of 3rd, north of this line would henceforth belong to Laurelle parish; south to Sisterwood. And the Bishop concludes

After having studied attentively the reasons of the three parishes concerned, in view of the severe penalties we find for the spiritual welfare of the faithful we decree the suppression of the Lawesians parish (Chelsea Baronnat Oct. 25 1962) Jan 1st and Exclusion Sanctae Aug 6 1966. No indifference we have decided that the archives of the parish of Lawesians especially the parish registers and matrimonial documents be kept in the church at Laurelle.

This made a difficult, and the departure of the church building in Sisterwood would in the last century of the history of the St. Bonaventure parish of Lawesians.

FR. PHILIPPE PELLETIER

Seventh Pastor

It was 1966 twelve years after Fr. Tim arrived in Sisterwood. He had grown since time here than any other pastor had or would. Parishioners were getting used to this semi-regular pattern. Fr. Tim was installed to Holston Bay, people had a little if I did - adapting to a different type of pastor, but equally earnest and dedicated Fr. Philippe Pelletier.

Fr. Pelletier

Fr. Pelletier's first decision with the board of trustees was to buy the house which Fr. Tim had bought and owned. As the bargain can pace it became office ally the parish rectory. The parish did not have sufficient funds so had to get a five thousand dollar loan. In a few years the loan was paid.

The parish also had to look forward to the need of doing something about the church building. The foundations were giving way, the floor had a very appearance of ruin, to all intents and purposes, beyond repair. The prospect of a new building had been mentioned during the 1961 census. It was becoming more and more urgent.

Could the parish afford it? The question could only just be asked, and now an even greater question arose. Did Fr. Pellegrini consider that he once made a commitment after an agreement in Lawrence Park, that he had the building there was not as Sparrowood. Perhaps the need was known, but the actual planning was left to the west coast.

In 1960 Fr Pellegrini left Sparrowood for St. Louis

SEPARATE & PUBLIC SCHOOL AMALGAMATION

Another change was brought to light as far as the Separate School was concerned. Back in early 1960, Catholics at their annual school meeting had discussed the feasibility of not attending a new High School. It was probably a question of space - the old one was overcrowded, and students being moved around to the schools, requires laboratory and library facilities.

But the Board and ratepayers found difficulties. Finances were already burdened. The number of Christian Brothers teaching were not the separate boys and so the Board struggled on, unconvinced.

However the Public School Board had built a new High School. So it was decided the necessary bills could be met and not have a panic. There remained the problem of students, though comparatively few Catholics, it was still enough to warrant retaining Brother facilities.

The St. Joseph's got no more to examine the possibility of a joint venture. As first, feelings and doubts about each other's positions prevented a start-up block to fruitful negotiations. After the Unit Board had not agreed to allow them to any form of amalgamation. It must be noted here that since the founding of the Separate School the sons of Spirit - and most have been - to be Montreal Uni-

a 1966 vote Sp ndment became a since the local school boards have co-operated from there to five numerous each negotiations were again reinstituted and after numerous meetings and trips to Regina a mutual agreement was reached.

The High School building is still the marriage by the necessary facilities. A la ium, gymnasium is not to be on the marriage and ceremony the consideration to each Board. Dr. Mc ll was eventually the gem. I students of the Catholic system would go to the an urged Public School. With the large number of students, the Public School would then provide better facilities for all. Some teachers from the Separate School would be hired in the Public School. As well, Catholics were assured the continuing system of religious instruction, during some hours to be mutually

At the time of their respective Boards, we can give credit to Duncan Wallis and Ray Michaud as well as to the other members, for making to understand and support each other's position. The goodwill and mutual understanding would in no can see it now creates a greater mutual trust throughout the Sparrowood community by

So in 1968, the separate School's last graduating class place. Henceforth, Christian Brothers would join the Protestant teachers at the Public High School. The building was enlarged and so the Public School Board (Trustees) would select their sisters and eventually the Public School as well.

By the amalgamation agreement, religious instruction was permitted in the school. A new Christian Ethics program, approved by the Department of Education to supplement course was, formally developed. Presumably, should the 8 year formula and was introduced at the Spallumeed Public School graduate from the province. St. Anne Elementary and St. Joseph's Elementary would be the feeders. Some Catholics and non-Catholics were enrolling in the optional class. Similarly, broad acceptance has been granted for the religious classes at the junior high level.

The Separate School has survived through the years. In 1960 a Board agreement was drawn for a thirty-three year lease for the property it was to serve the Church, and then, those who wanted to use a school outside. And in recent years the property was returned to the hands of laymen. In actual, it was necessarily before. Sisters. More recent is the Bursa- of Administration with the Separate School is moving and it is

FR CILLES DOUCETTE

Eighth Pastor

To build a church with of having two funds with a bit to do but we, he said but excitement fr Doucette when he arrived in Spirit and a 1960. But it did not see him and it was not the only challenge he was facing in his age.

The solution to the co problem seemed to be a the solid church building at

Lawrence Hall was then empty and retained. Before long the whole structure is moving the structure was remodelled plans made and its project underway. It deserves a special chapter unto itself.

Fr. Doucette did not, but the structure is the task of obtaining a suitable church building. Church orphan many other items that also must be built with his last on getting volunteers. as he p basis he cannot plead to pursue the parish to many a thorny topic.

The parish already had its Separate School. As mentioned progress, as Cathe is machine the Respect and those much for the re gious education of the students. The Canadian Catechism with its new approach and been introduced. But through a new emphasis on parent-priest-teacher meetings days of renewal for parents, lectures of the pastor in the

school Fr. Gillan pushed forth a real renewal of vision. The new approach was pursued so as to influence the pastoral approach towards the whole of parish life. During these years, Chaplain Bibby was attendant at the High School, Fr. Hill had much to do in this city, as will be further written about in the paragraphs about the school.

Children were not the only ones to whom the pastoral was directed in this new vision made to penetrate the vacant adult host of the church and its teachings. Through his mission of homilies, Father Bourcier gave his pseudo touch to think more. But he did not stop there. The Lenten Triduum was after year allowed an opportunity for the adults to hear about and discuss the latest developments in the Church and religion and the faith. We've also a way of gaining attention involved in instituting a new Lucci Church community. Many remember the Chrysler in Faith series of 1953 the images of Revivalism and 1972, the "Building Bridges" sessions of 1972. Add to that the Christian Formation Course given to the Rite of Christian Initiation in 1973. What drove the house likewise to one kind of deeper understanding and participation.

This liturgy was in full exclusion by this period of time. The new order of the Mass - the new Rite of Baptism - ceremonial celebrations of Penance were being introduced. At the Glengarry site, the Church Hall was being organized and still large yards into the material. Big auditoriums on the penitential rite the liturgy of the Word, the rites of Baptism gave new meaning to community worship. The preparation process for Christmas and Easter including the Penitential Celebrations, the introduction of Adventure, was initiated and probably many other details now forgotten brought life to community prayer.

Lay involvement was another factor done in Father Bourcier. Already before him lay people had been encouraged in be lectors, communicators, in all other prayer activities. This was now enhanced and extended to the parish councils the choice e.g. the afternoon giving the theme thought of to day by sermon), in execution of many liturgical projects.

Similar interest was happening in yet another field connected beyond the parish boundaries. Support was given to A.A. meetings, on a turn held in the rectory the parlor followed and aided this efforts Fr. Gillan while on his clergy at Spirkwood. Inspired and guided the formation of a Youth Club bringing together teenagers and young couples with the in on was towards spiritual, civic cultural and social goals. The members involved and the projects undertaken were truly impressive. Some of these initiatives have associated with in the Winter Festival. And beyond doubt the members gained vital experience in community action.

Ecumenism comes to mind when the previous overseas undertakings with the other clergy. Father Bourcier was certainly involved in the local ministerial association. There were joint services: Remembrance Day Thanksgiving, and other occasions. Many recall the joint participation and celebration of Christmas 1972, with the United Church congregations for many. It was a memorable occasion. There were also joint projects: got by by church groups together such as the great food suppers. Some even remember the political "cartoons" with other ministers with mixed feelings.

MOVING THE LAVENTURE CHURCH

Already in 1968 it was known that the church building in Spirkwood would have to be replaced. But a rectory was chosen as a priority that could be put off. Fr. Tom, this by parish. Now that the rectory was bought and paid for, attention could be focused on what to do about the church.

The first consideration of Fr. Bourcier upon his arrival was to set up committees to study what would be involved in moving the building to Laventure to Spirkwood. That moved a decision committee had to be made. Church form to search especially if you have no funds with which to build.

In October 13 1969 the Diocesan Council, by Bishop from Rockwood was here to suggest plans for the Laventure building. The decision reached and later ratified by the parishioners, was to sell and move away the old church and move the Laventure church to Spirkwood. Already by October 1969, the committee knew where to locate a lot and how to buy the old building. There seems to be no hitch or requisite, for the tenders were received the following spring.

During the winter of 1969-70 a fine effort was made to raise funds for the project. By the end of April was thousand five hundred dollars had been collected hardly enough to even start the excavation. The Parish Council Committee drew up plans in a four year program. To launch the program the first thing to do was to encourage all parishioners for donations and pledges. The object of was twelve thousand did not even four years, to six thousand per year the same committee would be needed to solicit. Committed renovate the church building. Some in my the men were to canvass the parishioners from door to door in the week of May 3 - to June 7 over the evening period was assigned on for a few months. By reports, some eighteen thousand do has was pledged, no thought of which was received enough for the first phase.

Phase I consisted in removing the old church building the foundations, and digging for Laventure church on Spirkwood. The old church was sold to Walter Mercer - it in the room as that it be removed and deliver beyond. On April 26, 1970, the parishioners help was requested to move in the Laventure Church all the article was to salvaged from the old church. It was to be the end from Mass would be used in the 1970 moment. The building was partially moved away some of it salvaged the was pushed into the cellar the that pressed on it, and the sun to it under the supervision of the Spirkwood fire brigade.

At the beginning of June, the new foundations were poured since through to January help. Everything was done

The parish before demolition

The old Methodist church

The existing Church

Thanks to the hospitality of the Anglican community Mass continued to be said in Sportsbrook on Sundays in the church. Also another Mass was said from at Lanercost during May and June then in Milford from July to November.

After the church was set on its foundations and a few alterations made it was opened by Bishop Cuthbert on November 22 1970 the First Church to be so opened. Phase 1 of Moving Church in event to eleven thousand was only two thousand strong.

Phase II saw the building structure the doors and windows inserted the floor underwall poured the ceiling insulated. By May 1972 Phase II was well under paying the by more crucial dating some landscaping phase V to begin in 1973, was on, short when Fr Donovan was moved to go to Black Lakes in August. Total cost to week here a the project was 22 seven hundred and debate all paid for and a slight reserve in the fund some one thousand five hundred dollars

PARISH COUNCIL IS PLANNED

Vatican Council Two he ire can be sified a various to a under direct form co-opera ion in the apostolate ch exercise ions on the Church No 30 ion in these how if big ing spread parish COUNCIL recognised long religious and people Christian mission a big to you ation for main parishes should have a parish council to bring together priests religious and laity to look at he mission he Parish Church

In Sportswood part h as almost everywhere else lay ministers consist of the pastor as the pastoral administration rarely on other matters in also free from the laity were involved in many apostolic and pastoral activities through the C.W.L. he Knights of Columbus and other groups. The Parish Council was created only to interpret the no receive responsibility to the Church by pastor Priests and laity in all areas of pastoral activity

In 1969 when Fr Donovan organized committees for the church moving pro ethnic together to organize, the Liaison committee helped the Youth Group organize allowed more lay involvement in the money he was laying the foundations of the future council. Soon it was mind the spring of 1973 that he explained brought up the topic And in his usual way he was thorough in his explanation of a Parish Council for through it was soon another Sunday bulletin was over a period of a few months. By June 3, 1973, the first draft of a Constitution for the Sacred Heart Pastoral Parish Council was ready for public distribution

Before anything further could be done in regards to Council, Fr Donovan was to leave Sportswood.

FR. GILLES AUMONT

Parish Priest

August 1973 Fr Gilles Aumont arrived from Marcoola to become the ninth priest of Sacred Heart Parish. It wasn't easy as Sidney Fr Bourgeois. The archive picked on which the parishioners had become accustomed over the past few (or years stopped abruptly. Fr Aumont's approach was somewhat different but parishioners seemed to enjoy the same as before.

Gilles soon was a communicator push forward. Using much of the basic of the Constitutions of the Parish Council pursuit in June elections were held on October 7 1973. This arrangement lasted for this ministry on October 15 and co-ordinators from the group were appointed for the ensuing year. By the end of October the new executive were formed and had held their first meetings. The Council was functioning.

Fr Aumont's general health kept him from meeting the responsibilities of the Council. But eventually this may have proved beneficial for they were brought into a situation where they felt obliged to take on many responsibilities hitherto left in the pastor. It also brought together the people for new Sunday Mass, other than mass. The committees behind the scenes, the liturgy, planning the Sunday bulletin (life and Mrs. Jerry Grennan used by mentioned here), and the general welfare of the Parish.

August 1974 Fr Aumont left to return to his original ministry but as it was to turn out, he would be replaced as pastor later in the summer by the man on Fr Gerald Hanrahan pastor of Lismore was, chief of this enlarged parish. It seems four communities to worship. Besides the other mentioned above. After urgent approach to the Bishop the pastor was warned in late June but because of previous commitments he could not come to the parish until August

RECENT YEARS

When Fr Peter Rosmad arrived on August 10, 1974, the parishioners seemed happy to have yet another pastor. Pastor they found Parish Council was not so enthusiastic as most of the tasks they had been given. The new pastor granted by because an quainted with the parochial situation.

Fr Peter Rosmad

In September the financial the parishioners. They had been ... doing no care pulpit to receive the church, but as we had no funds set for. The final phase of the program left hand with Fr. Rosmad had not really been completed. Two years ago committees to the building fund as well as to a special appeal fund started during Pastor Aumont's last year but with much disappointment.

Around the church the appeal had been prepared as in October the end for the lawn was paid in November and there after the Finance Committee was placed with a mandate to get the balance of funds needed for a new organ it was bought in time for Christmas.

In 1975, the cement steps and rails done were completed paid for by knights of Columbus. The warm connection from the lawn main to the church was made and water was available for the new lawn. During the summer effects carried on celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd in the Diocese of Lismore.

Attention then focused on the provision of action the church needed accepting, as did the rectory. As the February 1976 parishioners meeting it was felt the rectory renovations should come first. A special appeal brought in need sufficient funds for the work was launched in March to engender any good circulations. The Finance Committee studied various options and decided a three appeal in parishioners was best

SACRED HEART'S OWN FIVE-YEAR PLAN

By May 1976 ... was obvious for many concerned. Help could be needed to care for the church building and to renovate the rectory. The Finance Committee endorsed by the Parish Council issued out a five-year plan. The objectives were for to complete the rectory, to the church building. What was in the hold fig fund would be used to renovate the rectory, a single person rectory was sold to pay for the balance of a new one.

Needed was an ... to ... by five diocesan to Mary Immaculate to obtain eight boxes and chairs, carpet. The plan was explained to all parishioners at church and by mail asking for a minimum average of eighty do less per form by each year for the building fund.

The response was good and to the renovation took place as follows:

In 1976, the church roof was re-shingled in 1977 extensive woodwork on the church was repaired and rectory was stone roof steps and the interior was repainted. In 1978 church was a new sanitised ceiling and walls were finished, back of he church was remodelled. Sanctuary has been was redone lighting was changed, front was re-tiled. A vacuum cleaner was purchased as well as a set of drapes for the church. In 1979 the sanctity was completely renovated, with new cupboards, walls, carpet and running water has all cost.

To date the cost has been about thirty thousand dollars for the church and six thousand for the rectory. With one year to go we are still to ... the provisions of 1976. The people at 1 needs refurbishing. Nothing has been done to the heating

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARIES

The village jubilee of the Sepulchre School was marked with special festivities in July 1975 as the same one hundred pupils recalled that it was also twenty-five years since the Sisters of the Precentation came amongst us. Trustees, teachers, friends, graduates of the quarter-century were invited back to the parish to join in the celebrations.

Some former pupils came from such settings of the profession as organist or industrial authority. On the evening before the jubilee festivities formal grade from the end walls proved to be the years of headmasters and pupils since school days.

The next day began as registered as the school coffee was served in classrooms were open and decorated with nearly photographs of the pupils and other year history of the school. Former teachers visited the parish church memorials. A floor show which began with Mass at 11.45 a.m. followed by short recollections of the past and present pupils and visiting priests to Fr Thomson gave the homily and various people interested were in the event was shown in the functions.

Shortly after Mass, in particular break, we were served by the Knights of Columbus at his arena. Then at 2 p.m. a social in a program revived in an intervening and luncheon functions the years of the school and in St Stanes. History to the past to Tobacco, there were to trustees teachers, pastors, members, past pupils, but especially to the Sisters for their dedication and service.

The evening concluded with a pit-barbecue supper. It was a memorable day the involved every committee of the Parish Council, and a huge number of other volunteers.

PARISH COUNCIL ACTIVITY

The most difficult church and society. In celebration of the Sepulchre School event with our services may appear to the more difficult with the Close of Election in only a partial one. We and also consider the succession, just as has happened with to bring the spiritual and life of the church in recent years.

Shortly years before the programs of refreshment in the school and other areas of the parish were monitored. The the given Extra Irish Committee worked hard in Lenten Sundays one in 1971 all in literature, and others in '73 '74 '75 '76 and '77 with the by of the Pastor. In 1976, an international Lenten Session on St Mark's Parish was organized in co-operation with other Sepulchred church groups. The same could the planned pre-Christmas programs and shared in other joint-committee activities.

Liturgy is an activity in which but more in particular the Lenten Committee has constantly kept in view and provided the resources for the penitential services. Classes, drama, and all helps are a regular part of our community worship. Congregational meeting deeper participation by young and old. Sexual emphasis in liturgical season all add up to an uplifting praise of the Lord. Feasts and celebrations are held regularly before Christmas and Easter. And an effort is made to extend that living liturgy to weddings funerals and baptisms.

The Social and Apostolic Committee has also worked hard but it was in this sector of activity is not broad and undefined they have to meet the challenge to be helpful. Perhaps they have tended to be elderly-get-to-church, organize social gatherings church cleaning families after funerals some celebrations and other decorative activities.

The Finance Committee has helped Father look after the ordinary administration as well as the church completion projects earlier mentioned.

The central elected committee meets on a regular basis to activate regulations co-ordinate the activities of all committees. In 1975 it decided to exchange with other Parish Councils one of its members. On Tuesday 27 January, 1976 it was decided to hold a general meeting open to all members of the parish. This meeting was dropped due to lack of interest of some members.

THE LADIES OF THE PARISH

We have already spoken of the C.W.L. in the early part of our history. We must now complete it by mentioning their active years hangs established in 1949. Over these years of service many have given enormous years of service and as an example we can mention Annie McMillan and Eleanor Pritchett who were honoured in 1968 in twenty-five year members.

The records of the 1940 s are sketchy but it can be assumed that the involvement was similar to that before and after this decade. In the 1950's and 1960 s, the ladies were very active in many different kinds of parochial concerns. Here too, as with the Knights, fund raising seemed to occupy an important part of time efforts, card parties, tea socials, fish supper, banquet, meeting. Cooking always, bustling waiter washing dishes, serving tables were chores that became about commonplace for here.

But that was the minor details of this not true. Caring for church cleanliness visiting the sick community projects, concerns relating to Catholic women on the diocesan, provincial and national levels, anniversary work. These were some of their interests. In 1946, they hosted the diocesan

SOUL OF LITURGY

Music adds fine tone to liturgy. It should be a part of community worship. Singing as outside form of prayer when it is directed towards the Most High, or when it uplifts us to Him.

Over the years of our history, liturgical music has evolved from the intone angels to the lively popular or pounding drums, each has its own appropriate place. From the Latin and Gregorian chant to the modern vernacular melodies each with its own beauty.

Gazing from the records, it seems fit. Besides purchased Spanish wood fittings in 1931 for twenty-five dollars, but the winter, it added the total back if not paid for by the parishioners. When happened? Later, at this year, 1953-54, by Bernie Spinelli of paying a round for of fifty cents per month for the organ. After that it would seem the organ was finally paid for.

Obviously since the fifty blasts of Christmas 1953, conditions have long in earlier times. It was reserved for the choir, from the loft. Only in the ladies was the crowd really allowed to get on the organ was moved about so as to be with participation. The direction of the choir, under (modern language) into the liturgy brought about more singing in the language of the people.

But whatever the style or the format, procession and recessional are always most important. Of good liturgy. Even here many who have devoted themselves in these functions through the years about Fr Sperwood of Fr Lawrence are round rig churches. We find compelled to mention especially we of Iowa

The first is John Patrick Rodrigue who was organist in Midland for many years. After leaving to Spurwood, she was assisted George by Mildred Medalen and Lawrence with Father Tim to play in organ. We consider she deserves mention because of he length and extent of he dedication to church music.

The other person we want to mention is Mrs. Dorothy Nowak. What marking Lent, we did she was for the next date marrying a job in the Catholic Club. The Sunday after her wedding, a 9:00 event though a non-Catholic she was not loud to play the organ in the Mass. In the same year she joined the church in 1957 Mrs. Morrell had last place for on the organ keyboard. It wasn't just like eyes began retaining pedal pushbuttons. So she can she will declared him be entitled in the organ that was in 1955, but even less than she has been called out of her manner to play in funerals and a few other occasions. A 1977 he parish pastor had to hospices of room and a plaque in attitude for last long and continuous devotion.

At the instruments the parish purchased in first electronic organ in 1957 the services one was the beginner. The cost of the new organ was one thousand five hundred dollars, a far cry from the seventy-five dollars paid in 1931 in 1953 a new organ was purchased for six thousand five hundred

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Besides the C. W. L., the parish organization that has had outstanding influence on Church life are the Knights of Columbus. These work has been varied and shows their thirty years of real history. It can be summarized as being a medium through which the Catholic men have taken an active part in the life growth and welfare of the Church in our area.

The first mention of Knights in the records of the parish dates back to October 20, 1929 when a meeting was announced at the church. For the first few years they were members of Dubuque Council, and by regular monthly for activities there. On August 0, 1952 they organized their own unit in the council, this gave them more autonomy but they were still part and with the Dubuque group. They would function this way for the next ten years, keeping touch as in the Council by visits back and forth to Dubuque.

By 1962 the group grew with forty-nine members they applied for a Charter as an independent council it was granted November 0, 1962. Thus was born, Spirtwood Knights of Columbus Council No. 5353.

Over the years they have been active in helping the local church in many ways. Parish minded has been one important matter. Through bingos, card parties dinner socials they have contributed much towards furthering church improvements in the early 30's they were one of the three organizing by Catholic Supreme School in 1961 they were very much involved in the general canvass that took place. In 1970 they sponsored a project to buy a car for the diocese unbeknownst final worker. They won them wherever my design project needed their co-operation. And in a society of mutual aid their scope for action were beyond to various endeavors.

As the Parish Council began taking shape they had to search for a new role in the parish and this also through lack of interest, the Council decided failed out of existence. But the participation of a few knights and it is now on its way in recovery.

shelter. Each year the organs were mounted on the Christmas Music Last year 1978 we also purchased a set of drums Column we owned by the musicians, who play for us for a final note to this section. Let us just say that the Singers, since their arrival in the parish have always contributed much to music teachers. They have shared their talents with the church congregation by attending choirs, teaching others to play the organ and guitar, playing themselves, and doing the many tasks that are needed to the run-arm of good church music. So here again we are indebted to them

UNSUNG HEROES

So many have contributed to this have been recognised. There is an emptiness in the ranks, we would so have given to honour the unknown soldiers - representative of all those who died but remain unnamed. This honour could be called the page of the unnamed heroes of our parish

We have attended meetings so many people who worked long and hard for the Church to this area Lawrence St Stephen's, Medford and Rowners of Rowners. The Sarjents School had its hand with the devoted efforts of people. These, there were the teachers, those in the early days in the primary schools and those of latter years. There were the Sisters of Presentation and other Sisters who came to teach in the parishes. They also have not been neutral Organisations such as the C.W.L., the K.C., the Sacred Heart League, the Committees of Parish Council, the Knights of St Aidan, and others we may have forgotten but their time sacrifices, their leaders and their membership. The meetings the socials, fund raising, the Christmas parties, dances. Even we had some committee records here could see many in the names And what of the silent and unobserved contributors to parish life

The names we have mentioned in this book are therefore to be taken as representative of all those who are remained. If their names appear they are not necessarily the most important nor the most important Their mention helps to give a recognition a realism to the events, a face behind which stands so many others in the unsung heroes of our history

GOLDEN JUBILEE

And now we celebrate the golden anniversary of our parish Truly we do wish to celebrate the love of God he as so that been manifested through he years. We also look forward in its confidence to the future trusting that the generations to come will also have reason to celebrate fifty years down the road!

To end a song composed lately for the anniversary mass in he sang to the tune of 'Long, Long Ago

Fifty years have gone by
since the parish was founded
Then was long, long ago, long ago
With hard work and devotion
soon churches was founded
Long, long ago long ago

With a history so old
many tales could be told
Just a look through the files
Bring back memories and smiles
The start of the summer
Began in Lawrence
Long long ago long ago

A big thanks to the parties
who came through the years
Long, long ago long ago
It was began anew
the parish was growing
Long, long ago long ago

From hard work in the wards,
they built a church in Sparrowed
That was the start of our Sacred Heart.
Now we go on another at the celebration
That started here long ago, long ago

PASTORS

J A Scurfie	1929	May 10	1934
Nicolas Burrell	May 13	1934	Sept 14	1940
Parish Priests				
M M Bernard o.p	Oct	1940	Mar	1941
L Bagshaw o.p.	Mar	1941	Jan	1942
A Dermot o.p	Apr	1941	Dec	1943
M M Farren o.p	Dec	94	Aug	1945
Giles Ryan o.p	Sept	1945	Jan 24	1954
Rectors				
Y Gaerin	Jan	954	May	954
Martin Van den Akker	May	954	Aug	954
W S Timmermans	Aug	954	Aug	966
Clement Provencher Asst	Aug	962	Aug	963
L P Pollotic	Sept	1966	July	1969
G.Mc Groverie	July	1969	July	1973
Giles Ramsay	Aug	973	Apr	1974
Administrator				
G Poulet	Apr	1974	Aug	974
Henri Renaud			Aug	1974

N B 1946 Fr Burrell became ill, he was temporarily replaced by Fr Dussault who stayed until March 1947 then Fr Burrelle came for a few weeks, followed by Fr Farrow, serving the parish from Lawrence. In 1947 also Fr Burrell had passed away of cancer. Fr Farrow was named pastor

954 The parish was without a pastor for a year with Fillmg in during this time was Fr Yves Garnet, g.m.e.

1975 Again with a maiden prior for a few months. This time Fr G. Pradel filled in from Lourdes

TRUSTEES

John Saurette	1928
Leo Beauvillie	1928-29
Ray Ranger	1928-29-30
Charles Maineau	1929-30-31
Serge Fournier	1930-31
Louis Pereira	1931-32
Philippe Francoeur	1932-33-34
Ernest Samson	1933-34
Pierre Bessie	1933-34-35
Louis Crepeau	1935-36-37
Paul Cote	1936-37-38
William Bonneau	1937-38
J. C. Duval	1937-38-39
C. E. Ayotte	1937-38-39
C. Charbonneau	1938-39-40
Charles Vallee	1939
Art Lavoie	1940
John Labelle	1940
Thomas Collins	1941-42-43
Medeus Sarrazin	1941-42-43-44-45-46-47
Louis Vey	1943-63
Lin Beauvillie	1943-44-45-46-47
Hylas Fontaine	1944-45-46-47
F. Rabet	1948-49-50
J. R. Schell	1948
R. Connel	1948-49
Isadore Nouvet	1948-50-5 -52
J. B. Lemaire	1950-5 -52-53-54-55
F. Lamarreau	1951-53-53-54-55
Jean Baptiste	1955-56-57
R. Connel	1956
Bonaro Fontaine	1956-57-58
Henri Bessier	1957-58
Pierre Francois	1957-58-59
Medeus Sarrazin	1958-59-60
Joseph Perez	1959-60-61
Paul Bonneau	1960-61-62
Roland Chalifoux	1961-62-63
Guy Hesler	1962-63-64
L. Vermeulh	1963-64
Yves Beauchesne	1964-65-66
Manuel Etcheverry	1965-66-67
Candide Poirin	1966-67-68
Robert Martin	967-68-69
Ignace Schiste	967-68-69-70-7 72-73
Paul Soucacu	1968-69-70
Marvin Strasgmore	969-70-7
Albert Willett	1970-71 72 73
Jean Guillette	1971 72-73

PARISH COUNCIL — ELECTED MEMBERS

Corrie Pouwers	1973- 4 5 76-77 78-79
Ignace Noell Schepet	1973-74- 5 76
Rose Ferguson	973-74-75
Yolanda Skrobo	973-74-75
Robert Martenhart	973-74-75 76-77
Sister Pat Rooker	973 74
Sister Emma Rousseau	1975
Jean Hesler	975-76-77
Jeannette Guillette	976- 77
Armand Smith	976-77 78
Robert Martin	977-78-79
Beatrice Thegeon	978-79
Joyce Willett	978-79
George Wilcox	1978-79
Steve Samson	1979

PARISH COUNCIL — COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Too numerous to mention — they are all those dedicated to serve on the different committees to make the various items of local parish life. They remain the unsung others in our history as the unsung heroes.

BISHOPS OF PRINCE ALBERT 1929-79

Joseph-Henri Paul Bernier	1924-1937
Reginald Dupuis	937- 952
Leo Blais	953- 958
Lorenzo Isbaca	959

POPES 1929-1979 1929-1979

Pius XI	922- 958
Pius XII	939- 958
John XXIII	1958-1963
Paul VI	1963-1978
John-Paul I	1978
John-Paul II	978-

Prison des Sœurs Noires

The removed convoy...
39

Our church outside

1929 - 1979

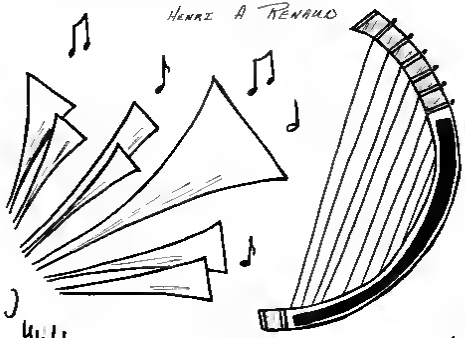
Sacred Heart Parish

Spiritwood - Sask.

THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

Sacred Heart Parish - Spiritwood

— Author —
Henri A Renaud



I will celebrate Your Love forever, Yahweh

Ps. 89

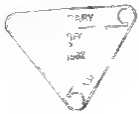
DEDICATION

To write th n h story to print th n book
his requ red the he p of many
To single anyone for thanks would
be to forget someone e se

To make this history to ive us events
his requ red the courage of many
To single anyone for praise would
be to miss someone e se

We therefore dedicate both this book
and the years it recall s
to the Author of all
May we celebrate His love forever!

BX
1625
S65 R65



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Printed by
Turner-Warwick Printers Inc
1979

NEW BEGINNINGS

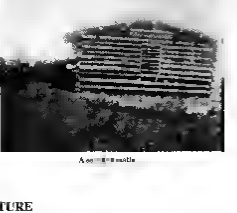
A new and The search for a new home can almost be said to be scriptural Abraham left h a farm ly to search for a new start The People of God wou d ater seek through the wilderness—he a land of milk and honey

Whe ka wa F t was not s ng ar monstrous that pushed pioneers to find new homes n northern Saskatchewan during In. Inster 1800 s and early 1900 s W th land in the south a l gobbled up settlers pushed further and further north into the park lands. Fort S a Corne Duck Lake and Prince Albert became places on the map And with the settlers came their Faith the r religion and their priests

One of the I st contacts w th catholic sm this region seems to have had was the south of the Oblate mission at Minitaq Lake A chapel e tablished soon e around 1878 As the settlers came north h priests of the mission k ot to keep in touch and to say mass at their homes Father Simonin visited the settlers near the present day Mi dred as early as 19 9 or 1920 He and priests a the Coderre as well as at the Snowsnake a h Sh ll Lak district

In 1912 un ber m ss n opened to the north-east at Shell River. In w ter wa n Visit ers There a carriage that the pastor F V h s awaited the Lanevture area as early as 914 and return d regularly at least once at Christmas and Easter to baptize, preach, marry and say mass

Offic ally b ause it was not until 1925 that a parish was ounded n ur area Father A Tomba became the first res dent pri st in the region Laventure was named after the famous Indian settlers of the same name and the parish was dedicated to St Bonaventure



A corner of the mission

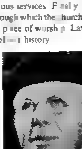
LAVENTURE

The h story of Laventure is closely linked with that of Spirits wod T began with St Bonaventure Parish grew both in the parishes in Spiritwood 1929 and in Leoville (1930 The churches out ished in exist ence by the end of the 1960 s when a shift a the population changes in the area and grea er ease of transportation led to the c ome of the Church at St Bonaventure Many of the parish ioners came to this Spiritwood Shellbrook area s rvices. Finally in 1950 an agreement was reached through which the church building came south and became our p ace of worsh p Laventure's history — part of the fabric of our history

Laventure parish was started as well as that in 1928 when Fr A Tomba was appointed there as priest in Fr Tomba would travel north as far as Norbury east as far as Shell Lake west as far as Midleigh Lake he would also make to the settlers living on the Eagle Hill Hay Meadow Schedule for the third and fourth weeks of Advent 1926 is rather interesting.

3rd Sunday Laventure
Monday Se batie
Tuesday Greenbush (at Wanuffle s)
Wednesday Midnight Lake (at Cadeau s)
Thursday Junor (at Lodinski s)
Friday Laventure
Saturday at Sarrazin s
4th Sunday Rat Lake (at Turgeon s)
Monday Shell Lake (at Simonar's)
Tuesday Norbury la McMullan s
Wednesday back to Laventure

Fr Tomba continued as parish priest at Laventure until 1930 He would be the moving force behind the church at Spiritwood where most of his remaining years were spent and serving much of the area mentioned above including Norbury for a few years



Fr. A. Tomba.

NEW CHURCH AT SPIRITWOOD

During the summer of 1928, Fr Joseph A Beaulac newly ordained, was appointed assistant to Fr Tomba. By the records it is obvious that he was given the care of the mission that would become Sacred Heart Parish of Spiritwood. The

Insertion of the new church wood shed block No. 8, purchased from the C N R for forty dollars paid in November 1930

The Sacred Heart Church

Plans were made and the construction of the first church building got underway. It was finished through the voluntary labours of the parishioners. The excavation for the foundations were started in November (unfortunately included were Eugene Emile Turgeon, Serge Fortunat Luc Sisseville was the head organizer and directed the work of men that numbered as many as twenty-five men at times. Despite many and deep to the cold weather Mr Sasseville kept things going and his labours were rewarded on grand total of one hundred & fifty during November and December of that year

5

The church about 1930

Some of the lumber had been cut the previous winter by parishioners and was sawed at a mill operated by a Mr Bell at Bellevue. More lumber was purchased from the same Mr Bell. The new structure was of wood, sixty by thirty feet with a twenty by twenty foot sacristy residence attached to the rear. The shell of the building went up rather rapidly.

Though far from complete the new church was ready for the Christmas Midnight Mass of 1920. An impromptu choir

6

directed by Mrs. Maurice Beaudoin was quickly organized and after a lengthy twenty minute practice sang at Sprucewood first mass/church mass. Apparently Fr Beaudoin with his own sense of humour rushed one of the parishioners forward during mass and whispered "Quick chestnut donkey" (They really sing terribly) The choir was not told of this remark and while the mass was over when they could laugh were comfortably about their performance.

THE PARISH IS BORN

On January 1919 the Archbishop of Regina issued a decree erecting a parish of Sprucewood and from the Catholic Church in Spruce Wood together with the following units to form by Father Beaudoin. Parishioners. Church of the Sacred Heart of Spruce Wood, Sask. Sound of January 1920 When then the day arrived was made by the priest pastor Father Wm Cannon as much as he had done at the mass of March 1919 and the first mass of the parish was celebrated by Father Beaudoin.

Mgr Hamel and wife

Charles Mansseau.

The trustees for Sprucewood unmarried by horse and sleigh to Laventure and there met with the parish and trustees of the mother parish along with their own pastor to be Fr J A Beaudoin. Common boundaries were determined and a request drafted to the Bishop asking him to approve the separation of the two parishes Signing for Laventure were the pastor Fr A Tembe and trustees H Renaud and

J. B. Allard for Spiritwood Fr. Beaulac, Luc Sasseville, Nap Ranger and Charles Munteau. Following the meeting, we are told, the participants share in a large glass of wine celebrating the event. According to eye witness testimony, the trip in the cold back to Spiritwood was quite jolly!

The boundary between the two parishes was decided as being a straight line dividing Sections 34 of Range 10 and 11 Township 51 the north half to the sections belonging to Laventure, the south half belonging to Spiritwood. The official request is annotated with the seal and signature of approval by Joseph H. Paul Jeanne, bishop of Prince Albert and Saskatoon, July 8, 1929.

TITLE OF THE NEW PARISH

The parish was dedicated in its beginning to the Sacred Heart. However, here are some indications that it had been previously considered to dedicate it to the Canadian Martyrs. The first book of accounts for Spiritwood opened on August 31, 1928 has on its cover page the inscription: Mission of the Canadian Martyrs.

This would seem to be corroborated by the desire the French speaking citizens of the time had to name the new post office "Goupil (ref. "Progress of Spiritwood" Bert Pelkan) Rene Goupil was indeed one of the martyrs - a layman - "New France...due to death by hostile Indians. In a Laventure parish centennial book, there is an entry for June 6th 1928, indicating the "name of Rene Goupil" as a topic to speak about to parishioners - why? Could it be because of the intention to name the new parish in his honor?

Why then was the parish not dedicated to Rene Goupil or the Canadian Martyrs? perhaps, it was because they had still not been canonized by the Church; that would come in 1930. As for the community the name "Goupil" also lost out and the name of "Spiritwood" was chosen - this name already "occupied the area" at least as early as 1928 (the announcement book of Laventure announces a Mass for "Spiritwood on the 5th Sunday after Easter)

The Canadian Martyrs

The Sacred Heart...

THE FIRST PASTOR
FR JOSEPH A BEAULAC

Fr J A Beaulac

Ordained on May 6 1928 a Sudbury Ontario where he had come to his theological studies he then came west to the diocese for which he had been ordained Prince Albert His first task was that of buying a bishop Pend hormie s se pelary ion of the qualifications of which was the ability to drive the Bishop s car Fr

Beaulac characteristics fly dunng and determined had and he knew how to drive though his experience had been mm mal

The road out came on a trip from Mindeg to Bear Lake the roads were terrible and the automobile landed in a ditch upsetting the Bishop driver and other passengers in the water Not long after Fr Beaulac rece ved his appointment to go to Lavern ere Someone jolted that the bishop would feel safer with another driver

In the summer of 1928 he became the first stationed Fr Tremblay in Laventure and by August it was obvious that he was in charge of the mission known as Spirwood The railroad was running the town site had been decided and the Catholics had chosen a for their first church but dring

Some parishioners had cut logs the previous winter for lumber and it was now time to start construct us of the edifice Father Beaulac was there to each of i A young man with much energy determined he spearheaded the project and set about to fund the funds to complete the church

He began running to say mass in Spirwood in August The foundation were laid and the struc ure took shape By Christmas it was suff ciently completed to have the Midnight Mass in the church Father had taken up residence in the rear part of the building room that were not too spacious poorly insulated and furnished very meagrely To keep warm during the night he made use of the heavy horse blankets of the day

As time went on he set up the newly formed parish of the Sacred Heart Oddly enough baptismal entnes s funerals were not recorded in the Laventure register until May 930 why? It is a puzzle was it because there was a feeling it would not be a viable parish?

Fr Beaulac could be termed a persistent negotiator those first years were filled with met parlor bazaars g nocs Imad nasting He was a pusher parishioners were not allowed to hang back and if they did he could be bitter The same applied to the liturgy the style of worship the parish was to Father was methodical and determined From some of his parishioners he gained information about where his strong stand was somewhat offensive. So these years were marked by giant strides in not only up the parish and in the same, no, underfined now and then with a mild ray

When his brother Maurice man of a local girl Irene Bun n and settled in Spirwood Father Beaulac moved in with them in the First Stone West This re idency was left in his hands only as a sacristy and s mall chapel from 1933 until 1934 when Fr Burrell was ordained the first pastor

MANY OTHER "FIRSTS"

D nese first s were many numerous but h ch not many firsts W ha already mentioned the first pastor the first pastoral ho, the Mass the first church a first meeting hall a, first baptism ts k place in the new church in Janttary 1929 Fr Beaulac baptized Joseph Bruno Laurent Fran ois son born January 6 son of George Francois and Blanche Pe ne Godparents were Bruno Bourgeois and Gilbert Gregoire

In June of that year the first funeral was that of Victor Dosen, b w boss descendents are still amongst us

It was not until August 1, 1929 that wedding bells rang in Henry and Irene Deconte Fr Beaulac was the officiating priest

Irene and Henry Deconte 50 years later

The first official pastoral visit and celebration of Confirmation by Bishop Prud homme took place on November 6 1932 Mr and Mrs Pierre Bourgeois acted as sponsors for the thirty six young candidates confirmed in the register were ing also the visit Bishop Prud homme writes Friday Nov 4, 1932 departure in one hum Prince Albert on board the C N R. Arrival in Spirwood at 1 15 p m Office and preparation at the church at 3 30 p.m. Splendid address by Dr Ayotte re ling in broad strokes the history of the parish confirmation ceremony solely following High Mass on Sunday

Nov. 6 For local reasons, we have not blessed the church on this occasion we will bless it later."

Bishop Prud'homme did return for another pastoral visit in 1925 and a note is included in the register saying, Before High Mass blessing of the church at 10.30 a.m. Sunday August 4, 1935."

FIRST YEARS

The early years were difficult. 1929 saw the beginning of the world wide great depression. Though the railroad had come to Spiritwood and businesses began to locate in the village, it could not be considered as a prosperous area. Crops were often small frost was often a factor. Then the area was hit by the drought that plagued the prairies of Western Canada. Wheat prices were low some sold as far low as twenty cents per bushel and many some of the crops were so small as two bushels per acre.

Spiritwood early days.

The parish had its growing pains; finances were totally lacking. But Father Beaulac was a persistent organizer. Already in the fall of 1929 a great bazaar was organized by the records more than one thousand dollars was raised. Along with receipts of parties held in various homes and with the annual dues averaging three to twelve dollars per family per year plus the Sunday collections (which in 1929-30 yielded anywhere from three to ten dollars, rarely more) the church gradually was embellished and expenses paid.

In 1930 it seems the parish borrowed fifteen hundred dollars and in as much as we could tell by the records this amount had not yet been repaid in 1934. (Five hundred dollars still remained to be paid when Fr. Roy arrived in 1949.) By that time four years interest was also owing. Add to that the fact that the pastor's salary (one hundred dollars per month) was not fully paid. All the annual meetings on February 14, 1937 the minutes deplores the difficulty of the parish to meet its obligations especially towards the pastor.

From the sacristy the first residence of the pastor he then moved to a house on First Street West. But in 1934 it was back to the sacristy. this time a new twenty foot addition that had been added to the church.

An important that was constantly made was for firewood. Wood provided heat for church and rectory throughout the 1930's and the 1940's. Most of it was donated, and the pastor had to remind the parishioners of this need. In one instance, at least, Fr. Harrell mentions that it is cold in the church, it was because of lack of wood. The cold probably stirred the generosity of the members of the congregation to bring in some wood. The same problem of wood shortage was recorded as the fall of 1942.

The difficulties were not all financial. Those of us who were then not recall the good old days must admit that some matters were serious, now obviously were also present then. There were conflicts and friction. Pastors were sometimes very strong in their attacks on those faults we all get even overlook today. Some were told quite bluntly what they must do or else. Excluding mention from his pew when it remained unpaid was one example. Conflicts such as one that arose over the electoral of the trustees in 1931 did not help the spiritual growth of the parish.

In 1933 a controversy of fire occurred at the church. The parishioners one morning to the church to find it filled with smoke. The parishioners were alerted and they began to haul pails of water to put out the fire. Fr. Beaulac had a rope around his waist and went inside to recover the Blessed Sacrament. Fortunately he made it back out without great harm. It was discovered that a person or persons unknown had set fire of out on Fr. Beaulac to be beam under the floor of the cellar. The results were a few holes burnt through the floor and a lot of smoke damage. The church was repaired without anyone really knowing by whom or why the arson. It was certainly an occasion for all kinds of suspicions and suppositions perhaps even a few accusations but no real conclusions.

If we recall these struggles it is not to reopen old wounds nor to depreciate the past. It was a time of heroism but it was not without its failings. And through it all depression crop in hires, human frailty the parish survived and even grew strong.

THE PEOPLE

A parish is people families of believers not only united by the others and among themselves to work as a community but also to pray to worship and to discover God together. The Catholic community in our area gathered here from far away places.

A first significant group came to live here from the Manseau district e.g. the Sarrazins the Ouellettes the Cotes the Rangers the Lalondes the Masseaus the Vallees the Nevaes the Marms. Soon they were joined by settlers from Vonda (Sasseville) Quebec (the Belangers) and many other places.

The [illegible] and people

A majority of [illegible] known in Immigrants to the [illegible] Perhaps the [illegible] of the Austro-Hungarian Empire as a result of [illegible] had a direct influence in [illegible] Whatever the reason, a large number of Hungarian families immigrated to Canada and in the 1920's many settled in the [illegible] Spruce Wood. Most of those being of the Catholic faith.

The population in the area of the parish of others [illegible] and take up land in the yet unclaimed [illegible] and Spruce Wood.

By 1929 the makeup of the population was comprised [illegible] families, [illegible] exact numbers in the total Catholic population [illegible]. But with the sons and daughters served by the parish [illegible] Spruce Wood, the number of families in the area has been a moderately high one [illegible] today in 1979 [illegible] approximately [illegible] three hundred and thirty (330) families (one hundred people) of Hungarian origin [illegible] Spruce Wood. In 1930 [illegible] the Presbytery [illegible] that there are two blessed Hungarian families [illegible] the south vicinity [illegible] Mildred area [illegible] Meadowlea [illegible] Add to that another [illegible] families from [illegible] the named [illegible] Spruce Wood and Bapaume, and we see that the Catholic population [illegible] that there are seven families [illegible] the [illegible] [illegible] the numbers are very impressive.

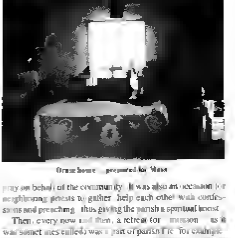
Confirmation at St. Stephen's

CHURCH LIFE OF THE 1930's

The Mass was not [illegible] the centre of worship of the Catholic community for the first years. Priests would homes and celebrated the Eucharist with the family and their neighbors e.g. Jules Sarrazin's home [illegible] the Martin Orosz home. As the communities became better organized, a church was built (Laventure 1924, Spruce Wood 1928, St. Stephens 1932, Mildred 1934). Then the Catholics of these areas gathered on a regular basis in their temples to worship.

Other spiritual events were: first [illegible] celebration of the sacraments, baptisms, confirmations, confessions, weddings as well as funerals. Various forms of devotions played a much more important part than today in the spiritual life of the people. Blessed Sacrament was a typical devotion [illegible] the following the Sunday Mass, or combined with the recitation of the rosary or the Way of the Cross on Sunday afternoons or evenings.

Some devotions were [illegible] once a year, events. Most of us will remember the Corpus Christi Procession of the Blessed Sacrament, a practice which lasted until the late 1950's. Forty Hour Devotion were two days of continuous adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, parishioners taking the various ho-



Orate Fratres prepared for Mass

pray on behalf of the community. It was also an occasion for neighbouring priests to gather, help each other with confessions and preaching, thus giving the parish a spiritual boost.

Then, every now and then, a retreat or mission was held. It was sometimes called, was a part of parish life. To example, he can preached by Fr. in Dupratt June 2 to 28 1935. Fr. Dupret would later become the third Bishop of Prince Albert). A retreat usually consisted of a Mass and conference (or sermon) in the morning with exercises, prayers and conference, in the evening. As long for over a week. It gave an opportunity to re-view the teachings of the Church and allowed the parishioners to renew themselves spiritually.

Religious education or catechism classes were always an important part of church life. In 1931 Fr. Beaucage announced catechism at 2 p.m. every Saturday to almost one year in preparation of the confirmations that took place in 1932. In other years catechism classes were held after school hours at the school. In the missions catechism was also taught.

Though the basic teachings of the Church may not have changed, the mode of preaching seems to have done so.

Father Pierre at Mass

Announcements and even complete sermons of the 1930's are kept in our parish records. The moral issues preached would perhaps surprise the younger generation of today. Scandals in the parish were severely reprimanded: the abuse of alcohol, public dances hanging out in the town cafe, boys and girls playing ball together.

Dancing seemed to be singled out as the most blatant moral evil. Below the thunder: it was preached not to say condemned by the parish of the day. And when a public ball was held in Spiritwood the problem became serious, the work of Satan would certainly be unleashed.

To get a little of the mood of the times, let us quote from sermons of the 1930's preached in Spiritwood. "It is a scandal for young ladies and young men to play ball together at midnight to the despair of these young women and as a trap put out by the devil against their modesty". And while the area became a part of the dust bowl, the drought and the outskirts of hunger we have called upon ourselves because of the famine, this time applied to the loose morals of the day".

Another reference which could be amusing was the low [illegible] "Today, along with summer holidays, gathering in the C.N. wiener hole to the young ladies and young men in return by from pranks together in the back of a truck under the cover of darkness".

Then there is thought hard times did not seem to deter the use of liquor, [illegible] drinks. If alcoholism is a problem today in our community it already was so in the 30's — at least if we read the frequent references pastors made.

In Some of the stiff seems to have been of the homemade variety, and some gentlemen apparently were pushers as well as users.

And the pastor might be consoled to learn that getting people to New Year's Day Mass was already a problem fifty years ago. The Ewe Party does not seem to be recent invention.

It was still an era when Catholics were encouraged to be a ghetto self closed community. Preservation of the Faith of immigrant practices seemed to be threatened by acculturation and espec. ally by courting with the protestants (a term that included all non Catholics).

CHURCH SOCIAL LIFE & FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

The material welfare of the local parish was difficult as we have stated. Many means were taken to raise funds. Church dues and collections did not meet the needs so each year projects were organized to bring in the extra income required.

These church act vities also made for a social life during the 30's. Each fall the bazaar brought together the parishioners income surpassed expenses. So with the exception of the 1929 bazaar the results were not sufficient to satisfy the material requirements of the parish.

During the long winters, there were card parties, basket socials, and other get-togethers in the homes. They provided social life, and brought amounts such as seventeen twenty-two and twenty nine dollars. Some suppers brought in seventy-five to fifty-nine dollars.

In the summer, it was picnic time, the church picnic may have been the predecessor of the "Sports Day" of the present, it, too, helped to bring in a few dollars and permitted the people to amuse themselves in the midst of the hard times.

Movies were also announced as entertainment in the 30's, e.g., "The White Sister" feature attraction from Sept. 23 to 26, 1931.

A most controversial way of raising funds was the rental of church pews or chairs. In the early 30's, pew chairs in the church could be "rented" for five dollars per year. Each family was assigned their pew or chairs - and if you didn't pay the annual fee, you would be faced with choosing to switch and finding some place taken (or even the chairs removed). In our day and age, it seems like a weak system - and sure enough - it did cause hard feelings now and then.

C.W.L.

Speaking of suppers and other projects to raise funds, we cannot help but think of the Catholic Women's League. Besides providing a core of dedicated ladies in the parish, the services they rendered to the local church cannot be adequately described. They kept the local Christian community alive without them the pastor would have had even greater problems.

The history of the C.W.L. as a local organization goes back to the early 1930's. The records that we have on hand do not reach that far back - but in the church announcements, reports etc. we have indications here and there referring to the C.W.L. e.g. on April 21 1935 an announcement of the reception of ladies into the C.W.L. In 1936, mention is made that there are thirty members in the C.W.L. In 1937 the C.W.L. was in charge of a supper in 1938 Mrs. John Labelle is president and, finally in 1941, the C.W.L. was dissolved and the group continued as the "Ladies of the Altar".

The 1935 Bishop's report of his pastoral visit to Milldale says: "We thanked the ladies of the C.W. League for the parochial banquet that they had prepared at the cost of real sacrifice."

By those bits and pieces of information, along with the references made to parties, suppers, picnics, work at the church (cleaning, etc.) we can pay tribute to the ladies of the day for being true pillars of the Church, maintaining its life through their hard work and dedication.

We might add that in the late thirties a few references are made of a junior C.W.L., single young ladies who along with their elders counterpart took into a large many services for the church activities.

MEN'S ORGANIZATION: SACRED HEART LEAGUE

If the women contributed much to the subsistance of the parish, the men were not altogether absent. The "Sacred Heart League" was a men's organization in the early days of the parish and numerous lists of the 30's and 1950's, at least a number-thirty of forty.

What their work was all about is not too clear. From the information we can glean, they were called upon to provide the manpower for the picnics, banners, decorating (e.g. for the Corpus Christi procession), services at masses, and perhaps much more. Little written information survives. The Bishop does mention them in his reports.

When did the organization fade out? It is a fact lost in the pages of history.

FR. NARCISSE BURRELL

Second Pastor

The Rev. N. Burrell, M.A., Ph.D., arrived at the parish of Spintwood with Rev. C.A. Vizmathy, on Saturday afternoon, May 12th, at 5 p.m., 1934. (From an early announcement book.)

Fr. Burrell had been ordained in 1924 or 1925. Because of poor health he had been refused ordination in his home diocese. Accepted in the Prince Albert diocese, during his first appointment at Wakaw he made good a promise he had made to build a shrine to the "Little Flower". Thereon in 1929 he left for two years of study in Budapest, Hungary (the contact with the numerous Hungarian families in the Wakaw area must have been the incentive). When he returned to Canada he was sent to Albertville. Again he he himself says he enjoyed but hardly to speak, and to write Hungarian, a role he really was considered as among him as pastor of Spintwood, with St. Stephen's as a mission, in 1934.

Cecc Vizmathy, who arrived with Father Burrell, was a seminarian from Budapest, he was to spend time here to study theology under the guidance of the pastor, learning to the priesthood. His mother and sister is to come to Spintwood and live in a small house near the rectory. Eventually Mrs. Vizmathy did some of the housekeeping at times at the rectory.

The success of this summary experience in Spintwood broke down two years later. Difficulties arose, and Cecc I wrote the Bishop for aid to return to his native land, along with his family in 1936.

When he first arrived here, the rectory was hardly habitable, so Father Burrell stayed for a few months with the Beaucage's. During that time, the twenty by twenty foot structure at the back of the church was enlarged to the full width of the church nave to have two floors, and became the rectory as it stood until the 1950's. The renovations and work were done sometime after August of 1934.

The years that Fr Burrell spent were difficult. Poverty was a real problem. After remodelling the rectory furnishings had to be procured, people did not have any money. And with the crop failure of 1937 there did not improve.

Fr Burrell had support of friends and family in the Maritimes, and with their financial aid, plus free labor from the parishioners, he managed to get things organized. Bishop Pinsonneault, in his report of his 1935 pastoral visit wrote:

Thanks to generous benefactors from beyond the parish the pastor had been able to enhance the parish property by a fence a garden a chicken coop a barn a summer kitchen etc. Moreover he has endowed the church with a splendid altar and gallop (the handiwork of Mr Lac Sauveille of Spruwood) and a number of religious articles.

It seems Fr. Burrell paid for out of his own pocket. Other things he did religious articles. An inventory the bishop asked him to make he after many household items and furnishings he donated to the parish.

The poverty was accompanied by other problems. The numerous missions the distance he had to travel over poor roads the stress of not always being understood some times even the controversy all these made the years difficult ones and Fr. Burrell expressed his uneasiness about the situation. Eventually illness became the dominant factor and he was forced to abandon his ministry by the fall of 1940. He died before he left the parish. He was try ng to be parishioners to but it s parish his. He had solic ed ambers and cement but the project seems to have been dropped after he left. A really very s ck man he returned to his native Maritimes and died there of cancer in 1941.

SATELLITE COMMUNITIES

As he Spirit wood area developed, surround ng districts also grew. Our parish s history cannot be told w thout some ng the importance of these neighboring areas and their people.

By 1935 Spuntwood was the ce ntre from which Fr. Burrel (who had replaced Fr. Beaulac as pastor in 1934) min stered to various places. When Bishop Pinsonneault came for confirmations in 1935 he tells of his visit to the different missions of Sacred Heart Parish. At each he said Mass and confirmed the children. The first was St. Stephen's in the Norbury district; another at the Saxe home southwest of Spuntwood, Ragsaine (home of Ilen Chenier), Mildred, Shell Lake (McClana s Garage) at the Gabriolais s, south of Mildred. At the time of the 1935 visit, the Bishop s report lists St. Stephen s and Mildred as having these own church plans were being made to build chapels at Shell Lake and Ragsaine. Eventually Mildred would become an independent parish before it would be reunited to Spuntwood.

All of the areas with the exception of Shell Lake, would eventually be absorbed by Sacred Heart Parish. Even the middle parish of Lavoyle would be at times and be partitioned between Spuntwood and Leoville. But the fact remains that the history of each area is very much a part of our history.

ST STEPHEN'S COLONY

It was said it loned abo ut the a large number of Hungarian families settled sou h of Spuntwood. Undoubtedly in encouraging these people was inadequate because of the difference of culture and language. It was unsurprising that they should request a priest to minister to them in their own language. A note dated February 1929 was written to Bishop Pinsonneault by A.C. Snyder, a notary public on behalf of the Hungarian population (two hundred and thirty families five hundred people) for a resident priest of the l anguage.

Hungarian clergy e western Canada were not easy to come by so Father Tombot was led the area to ery many and to m inister as best he could. Even after he left La ventate to go to Fa rbridge he still returned occasionally to the district, saying mass in the homes. For a numpl e at the Martin Orosz farm. Now and then a Hungar an priest from Stockholm near Regina. Fr Sandits Pal would come to ministe to these parishioners.

In 1934 Fr Burrell came to Spuntwood he had studied two years a Budapest and could speak and write Hungarian, by this St. Stephen s had its church.

The church was a log structure, twenty by thirty feet, built on Section 22 Township 49 Range 11 West of 3rd. It was erected by the parishioners sometime between 1930 and 1932. In 1934 Father Burrell would request permission from the Bishop to bu ld a new and large church but the project never seems to have taken place.

The frequency of serv ces remains a question mark but it would appear that they were fairly regular during the summer months and occasional y during the winter.

After Fr. Burrell left Spuntwood the succeeding pastors Frs. Fenton and Roy continued the summer ministry at St. Stephen s. Catechism c asses were organized for the young people during the summer, taught (at least in a few occasions) by the Sisters of Service from Stockholm Sask. As well in 1942 a Father Veszes of Keg na gave a retreat in Hungarian at the church. Again in 1954, a retreat had been

A missionary stop
Servants home.

planned for October th at time Fr Byrn was to preach A change of pastors may have led to the plans being dropped The S shop confirmed at St Stephen s in 1935 in 1940 and perhaps in other years.

The church remained in use until 1955 after which it seems to have fallen into disuse Eventually the chairs from the church were used for the Separate School s one of the

stained glass windows was given to the Shell Lake chapel And now the building is in disintegrating condition a reminder that times change

As for the people they too have changed grown The families were hard times and many of the Hungarian families moved away both east and west But many stayed and are now living in communities

St Stephen's Church and parishioners

BAPAUME

When horse and buggy was the quick way to travel when roads were trails and just about impassable seven miles was a long distance We know that Fr Tombo tried to reach all Catholic neighborhoods by going into a home gathering families together say ing mass and min istering to them Bapaume was one of these neighborhoods

During the 1930 s there was a feeling that we should perform a to have a chapel in Bapaume When Bishop Pruel homme came in 1935 he went to Bapaume visited and held a confirmation for eleven young people at the home of Ben Chenie After lunch a meeting was held with the parishioners

The Bishop stated that the topic of discussion was the build ing of a small church Lumber was already available a The b shop agreed and a board of trustees was elected J B Chartrand Joseph Levasseur and Ovide Chenier It was to determine a site and draw up more specif c plans

However as we read through the records, we find nothing more about the project We can only surmise that the people under the leadership moved to Spiritwood for church services

GABORIAU'S -

South of Mildred

The name was first the Bishop m 1935 records that he also went to the Gaboun au home abt minutes from the south of Mildred There three young people were confirmed after a Mass. Apparently this was another of the areas that Fr Burrell visited and gathered he ne ghbors for Mass in the mid-thirties.

O ber 1935 the Bishop writes At 1 p m father confirmation mass and sermon We went with Fr Labbe in a democrat through stumps stones holes to confirm Mr Selima der and h saw fe l took forty five minutes to go a mi and a quarter It says someth ng of the road conditions

The Gaboureau M ssion was not abou t take away They continued having mass now and then by Fr Burrell On January 7 1937 at the home of H lene Gaboureau a meeting was held that came to a decision to build a log church It would be twenty two by thirty, two feet on two acres of land in the northwest corner of the NW quarter Section 8 Township 49 Range 9 West of 3rd land to be donated by Hélène Gaboureau

A few more meetings were apparently held on the plans, but this project also was shelved and eventually given up The area became a part of the Mildred parish

MILDRED

The history of the Church of Mildred dates back to about 60 years. Some time before 1920 the area district was known as Fr Germain from Muskeg Lake visited settlers in the area. Some of these were the Masses in the Colonie home just south of present day Mildred. He usually travelled in the winter season in a horse drawn novelty called Piff and Paff accompanied by his dog Saint Bernard. The special mission was with the long white beard, very strong with most hats and remarkable. It is his kind things to say about him.

Later when Fr Tardiveau was Pastor of Lavoie he began visiting the area on a regular basis. His subsidiary often included Rat Lake. It became his custom to have designated the regular mission station about 1920 in Mass when the centre where he said mass was established as the Trigeon home.

In 1928 Fr Beauchamp came to reside at Spirtwood and by 1930 (perhaps earlier) records indicate he was going to Mildred. Some accounts say that once at least masses were held at the hall. Also in the early 30's priests would come by train no doubt. In St Prince Albert to commute to parish duties. The name of Fr Daigle crops up quite often in his register from 1932 to 1934. Fr Dupeut also called because his property would also come now and then.

Fr Burrell began serving Mildred upon his arrival in Spirtwood in 1934. It was at such a time that the building of a Church was started. It was built on land belonging to Z Sankiewicz (a merchant now Lives here). The first time it was used as a place of worship was on Christmas Eve for the first midnight mass celebration. It still had no siding for no windows. Because it had not yet been finished the building was not used for mass the first winter after its completion.

On August 8, 1935 was Bishop Pinet became pastoral visit to Mildred. In his report the bishop writes. During the evening (August 7 from Spirtwood) departure for Mildred I Sokiewicz merchant of Mildred came to visit with his much. We stayed at his home. Next day Tuesday August 8, 1935 low mass by the pastor. We heard confessions mostly Germans. Sermon mass General communion. This communion gave joy to our heart of bishop. We found here a chapel in a very poorly though modest but suitable. There is also a rather very large and tight accommodation as temporary residence the passing minister.

Last time this day the Bishop sang the High Mass with sermon in French English and German. Confirmations followed. Forty-four candidates received the sacrament the parishioners says some, hang it is at the Catholic parish son of the day. The collection at mass brought the handsome sum of two dollars and thirty five cents.

Further in his report the bishop writes. A parish banquet prepared by the ladies gathered around us the whole Catholic population and many non-Catholics as well. The bishop gave a conference on Christian education and the organization. It is important to be found in the community. He promised that he would think seriously of sending children resident pastor in a couple of years.

Mention was also made of purchasing lots from the C N R on which the church was to be moved. Apparently the lots were subsequently bought for at an announcement on Sunday September 22, 1935 Fr Burrell states that the transaction for the church will be turned on lots. That same year the parish received five hundred dollars from the Catholic Church Extension to help complete their church.

In December 1935 Christmas Midnight Mass the first at Mildred's history is announced. Father Burrell requests but the parishioners make it beautiful as with was to accompany the organ to the hymns. Along with this announcement another call to place the church on gluton rich lots in the town as well as the hand log of logs for a house for the priest twenty-six by thirty feet.

Obviously the church building was moved and over the years improved and furished. However a rectory was not built. The years became worse instead of better and the poverty of the times explain why. 1937 a trustees meeting deplores the hardship to pay the pastor and to make essential repairs.

FR GEORGES LEMAIRE

Pastor at Mildred

On March 17 1939 Fr Georges Lemaire arrived as the first resident pastor. Fr Lemaire came to Canada as a member of a religious order the Fathers of the Sacred Heart. With a few others of the order they hoped to establish the order in Canada but after some years the order asked the priests to return to France or join the diocesan clergy. Most chose the latter option. Fr Lemaire became a Canadian citizen and later became parish pastor of Mildred.

Fr Georges Lemaire and a couple of Montreal Police

Immediately upon his arrival he was put to work. The very next day a parishioner Mr Morrow died. And one day after that the new pastor baptized Lil ian Eva daughter of Frank Sr and Katherine Schaan.

The task of finding a suitable residence was then faced. The parish purchased a house from Walter Wenger and moved it onto the lots adjacent to the Church. Cash for the purchase was borrowed from Mr Woodcock a merchant and parishioner. The other parish members repaid him by hauling cordwood.

Fr Lemaire would say as pastor until serious illness forced his departure in 1953. It was extremely difficult for him to leave. His beloved people his enemy was already producing him incapable of ministering to them. After a brief period of retirement at Zenon Park he died and was buried there in 1955.

He was a true shepherd to his people. he is remembered almost universally with excellent memories by all who knew him. But his record-keeping abilities were not the greatest so very little remains in written testimony of his years as pastor. For historical purposes it does leave a vacuum that can only be filled by a few memories of people who lived that period.

We are told he wasn't much of a housekeeper either! The ladies would organize a bee to clean the rectory, at least twice a year. Father apparently won't let them be, but felt that he couldn't find anything after they left. He loved to mingle with people and was friendly to all, nothing sophisticated about him. Sometimes he would even go out and help the farmers for example to stook during harvest. He also loved to work outside and did much to beautify the church and rectory grounds.

One instant is told about him. He had been at a card party at the Mr. Lake School. While there a snowstorm had blown up and on his way back he can get stuck in a bank. Next morning a parishioner saw the car almost completely covered in a snow drift. Almost fearful he dug to see if Father was at there perhaps hoping that not! The neighbors had missed him. So off to Wilcox they went not knowing that he and walked that mile or more in the blizzard and cold.

DOMINICANS TAKE OVER SPIRITWOOD PARISH

In 1938 Fr Shop Fred Bourne was replaced by a Fr Shop Roger Dupras a Dominican. With the shortage of diocesan priests Bishop Dupras was able to get help from his community. So when Fr Burrell became ill he was temporarily replaced by a Dominican priest Fr Fr M Dussault a period which lasted several months from Oct 1940 to March 1941.

Fr Dussault had no doubt been made aware of the financial plight of the parish and was determined to see things right. He lived on site as a system of lay support by and a fixed compensation for the pastor. But somehow he was unable to grasp the pulse of the parish and it didn't work out as the way he would have liked.

By spring of 1941 he was replaced briefly by a Fr L Bussiere an Oblate. During the summer months the parish was vacant. Fr Dumas pastor of Leaven re came to say mass on Sundays and take care of affairs in entry.

Fr N Parrot with communion class

In December 1941 after Fr Bureil had passed away Father Norbert Ferron another dominican became Spiritwood's third pastor. Very few memories are left to describe the 1940 s in our parish history. It was finally a time when the area was gradually coming out of the depression

and drought of the 30 s. Secondly... it was a time of World War when despite appearances that nothing was seriously affected there was not too much growth or prosperity.

A few parishioners went off to war others were affected by rationing cards or books. Drives were made for War Bonds people were asked to contribute to the Red Cross, etc. And along with the prayers to obtain peace, church life went on.

The spirituality seems to have followed much the same pattern as that of the 30 s devotions, mass, prayers were of the same style. Fewer remarks were made about dances, socials, house conduct. Little change was made in the style of church life.

Revenue was still hard to come by. Spiritsonus remained a rather poor cause. Card parties brought more than before, e.g. one forty-three dollars, another one hundred and three dollars. Summer picnics, fall bazaars were still the order of the day. Volunteer labor was called upon to keep up the premises.

Just as it had been in 1938, to paint the church in 1942 so clean the yard and plant the trees (some of which still stand in the south of the present building). And there was still the problem of getting firewood.

It seems from the feeling given by reading the records that a greater confidence was developed towards church and pastor. Religious education became more and more a vital issue. Sisters came to teach catechism both in Spiritwood and at St. Stephen s during summer vacations. Teaching of religion in the schools was considered to be a possible lay and it is Father Fermin who made the first contacts which would lead to the Sisters of Presentation coming to this parish.

Times were still difficult, Fr. Fermin mentions in his announcement book that he had no horses no car and must depend on his parishioners to take him to the mission of St. Stephen s (attended to regularly during summer months but apparently closed during the winter). Sunday Mass for Mildred is concerned times fluctuate since 1938 and is no longer the responsibility of the local pastor here. Parish visits also were made despite the lack of vehicle.

No major projects seem to have been mentioned or completed during these years except a retouch of repairs to the altar and foundations of the rectory in 1943.

THE ONGOING STORY OF LAVENTURE FR. PARADIS

In the 1920 s as we have described Laventure was the centre from which all a large area received the ministry of the Church. Within that area numerous parishes or missions would be born Spiritwood St Stephen s Midland Meadow lead Fairholme (now Glaslyn) Rabbit Lake Shell Lake Leoville.

When Father Beaulac was getting established in Spiritwood another young priest was sent to help Fr. Tourbe at Laventure. He came in the fall of 1939 and his name was Fr. Alex Grimard. It was a growing area. Bishop Prud homme

First church, Laventure.

writes in the Laventure register up to this 1928 visit. This part of the diocese has marvelously developed in the last four years. The railroad will soon cross the district. The land in cultivation has considerably increased, about 6 000 acres have been broken to date in 1928 alone. (August 21s, Fr. Grimard ministered to Catholics north of Laventure and was to become the founder of St. Therese parish of Leoville. The reg sters began in February 1930 we can assume that the parish was officially set up by then or shortly after.

In the same year 1930 Fr Armand Tourbe left for Edelbrae the name the bishop gave if praise for his apostolic zeal in ministering to this why i area. Later when the diocese of Prince Albert was divided Fr Tourbe found himself in the new Saskatoon diocese where he would stay un il his death as P ggar in 1966.

Laventure was now by itself not too large in area, but still with many farm families nearly one on every quarter section of land. A pioneer area is that on a dark night from his second floor window you could count some twenty-five lights com ng from different homes near you would probably see only three or five from the same location. Another factor that made the parish viable was the larger size of the families then than a greater number of souls as parishioners were some times referred to in church language.

When Fr Alexander Paradis came as pastor in September 1940 it was to a smooth running rural parish without any missions. Fr Paradis never drove a car so his movements were restricted. By all appearances church life with its weekly and daily masses its devotions its packet suppers and bazaars much resembled that of Spiritwood. If we can judge from impressions gleaned from reading the mass ment books and records there was less controversy and greater ease in financing (though in the 30 s there were real difficulties in this area as well). Perhaps the group was more musical this and held more together.

Times were hard no doubt. And if one goes to the graveyard looks at the tombstones one becomes aware of the high infant mortality of those first years. Upon checking the funeral register we also notice the alarming number of young people dying long before their time. Questioning

A parish in the 40's.

old wives about this they would tell of incidents where disease or accident would overcome someone and when you could afford a doctor it decided to go for him the distance and road conditions often made him arrive too late.

Religious instruction to the children was given at the schools in the predominantly Catholic district. In church history we cannot forget these valiant teachers who went out to the pioneer districts literally in the wilderness and helped settle the three R's. Also passed on the rudiments of Faith. One such teacher's name will be familiar to Sprucewood readers she came from Asbestos to the North Creek School in the early 1930's and passed on her enthusiasm. Her name Marianna Dussault. Just to become Sister Marianna who returned many years later to teach at the Spruewood Separate School. If we pick her name this only to recall all the teachers of the one room country schools in our area who helped the Faith to grow in the hearts of their students.

FR. DUMAS

New Pastor of Laventure

In 1941 a Dominican priest, Fr. Andre Dumas replaced Fr. Paradis as pastor. Parish life continued much as before. But during these years a new church would be built across the road from the first structure.

The first building dated back to 1924 it was a simple log structure with only a cross mounted on its peak reaching out towards the heavens. In 1927 the building was lengthened and a steeple constructed. The rectory was really the back

towards the heaven La nature

past of the same building and provided cramped quarters for the resident pastor. Further back from the building a fence encloses a graveyard that will be the burial spot for residents of the area.

Church pe[illegible] re

By the time Fr Dumas arrived the edifice was in a poor state. And instead ately upon his arrival we are told he began a ful[illegible] bazaars picnics and other functions to raise money [illegible] a new building.

When one examines this it is obvious Fr Dumas would not build something to replace [illegible] The full basement was a true social undertaking and a solid brick structure. This actual existence originated a number of years. Some think it was started in 1945 while the exact date and the beginning of the foundations. As funds and free labor were available construction continued.

Records show that in 1945 Father was thanking parishioners for hauling gravel stone and lumber. Also volunteers were being asked to work at the construction site. And by expenses recorded it was [illegible] in [illegible] 1946 1947 and 1948. Then on June 19th 1949 the blessing. The church was announced for July 10th.

The new church Lavaltrie

In the same period of time foundations were laid for a rectory alongside the new church. However nothing ever came of these cement markers, or[illegible] they would mark the fact that the parish was growing weaker.

1952 came. Fr Dumas was not well. Also, under Bishop Jolas, the Eudistcans were withdrawing from the parishes. In August the church buildings left. Later on December 10 he was replaced by Father Martin Van den Akker. By the following summer Fr Van would move to Montreal and in 1954 to Spiritwood serving Lavaltrie as a mission for the first time since 1924. It was without a resident priest the auxiliary parishes had outgrown the mother parish!

It was on June 13 1954 that a special celebration took place in the Lavaltrie parish. For the first time, a native son, Herve Valles was ordained to the priesthood. The occasion was a memorable one not only because it was a first, but because of the festivities. Upon arrival, [illegible] the previous days roads [illegible] on the highway were just about impassible. Bishop Jolas was to arrive the previous evening, however his [illegible] became bogged down near Milford. From there on [illegible] pulled and dragged, until finally he reached Lavaltrie at 3 a m. Others [illegible] so vitally necessary to the ordination never made it. But before the ordination was over Fr Valles [illegible] as Father Albert.

Fr Timmermans came to Spiritwood in 1954 and would serve Lavaltrie for the next two years. The next resident pastor was Darrie[illegible] in August 1956 Father J A Campagna.

FATHER GILLES ROY, o p

Fourth Pastor of Spiritwood

Fr Roy arrived to take charge of Sacred Heart Parish on September 4 1949. He seems to have been a solemn individual set about the task that was before him.

First of all there was the matter of an outstanding debt to the diocese from a loan made to the parish in the 1930 s. Fr Perron had apparently made a five hundred dollar payment during his stay here and now Fr Roy asked the parishioners to help pay the final five hundred dollars. After the fall bazaar in November the C W L presented the parish with a cheque to close the debt.

Fr Gilles Roy o p

As well Father Roy was suggesting that the church be raised in the spring and a basement built underneath. But this project seems to have been abandoned the cellar (a trench inside the church) often had water in the spring and with time would affect the whole building, but that would be a project for the 1970's.

Fr C Ro and parishioners

The most impressive undertaking of the parish in these early 50's was beyond doubt the formation of a Separate School Fr Ferron had in hand the idea and now that the process had been set in motion Fr Roy would pursue the goal with zeal

In May 1950 he preached a strong sermon advocating the necessity of a Separate School because of the difficulties experienced in obtaining French and religious instruction at the Public School The other steps will be mentioned later

Fr Roy continued serving St Stephen's until the summer of 1952 saying Sunday Mass there during summer months. Religious instruction by Sisters was organized for one week in July for the children at St Stephen's

During Fr Roy's stay in Spiritwood the card parties bazaars and picnics took on the added responsibility of church and school The years witnessed the campaign to establish a French Radio station in Northern Saskatchewan the debenture issue for the school the welcome of the new Bishop Leo Blais the blessing of the new Separate School the confirmation of Fr Vallee at Lavrenture

The arrival of the Sisters of the Presentation in August 1950, was to mark a new period in Catholic education this is elaborated upon in another chapter of our history) because know that the influence of the Sisters went far beyond the school The blessing of their convent on January 6 1954 was a blessing as well to the parish Their permanent residence here was to mark a new chapter in church life a chapter we will write separately

The early 1950's also saw new pews (contracted out to Clifton's Co of Spiritwood) being made for the church

The C W L were active and the Knights of Columbus began in Spiritwood We will write more on these work in another chapter

Spiritually the primary of God's love continued Retreats were organized for example by Fr Dubois in 1950 Fr Lafrenieres in 1954 and Fr Bystia in Hungarian in 1954

On January 24, 1956 Fr Gerard Roy announced his departure the next day the new pastor's ill untained It wasn't too many years in 1966 that the parish learned he had passed away

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE

It was stated earlier that religious instruction of the young is an important part of church life In our parish this part was to take on a new direction as our position in the community changed In the early years the majority of the population of the immediate Spiritwood area was Catholic and further most part, of French descent In 1930, for example in a letter to the bishop, it is stated that there were only about 35 families of Protestant background (non-Catholic) compared to seventy-five Catholic families

These facts explain why the liturgy (mass) the announcements and sermons were mostly in French It also explains why religious instruction whether on Sundays, or at the school was given mostly in French Also the pastor in the 1930's seems to have had ready access to the school after hours for catechism lessons

As the population grew, as the district was enlarged, and especially as the larger Unit was introduced into the school system, Catholics became a minority of the last important one. For this reason, religious instruction to youngsters was rendered more difficult. As well, the survival of the French language was put to the test. Solutions were sought to what were considered parallel problems.

In 1942, Fr. Perron initiated correspondence with Sister Marie-Ste. Lagarde, provincial superior of the Sisters of the Presentation. Some of the Sisters had been to Spiritwood to teach summer sessions of catechism and had been favorably impressed by the Catholic population. In turn, the Catholics were impressed with the Sisters. Fr. Perron's approach was to ask whether the Sisters would consider coming to Spiritwood and taking up positions in the schools next beginning in 1949. The local board was of a Catholic make-up and was favorable to the idea. This arm would be to have better French instruction as well as the possibility of religious instruction in the school - even after hours.

The Sisters agreed to come if at least two were hired on the teaching staff. The next step was to approach the Shell Lake School Unit Board and request that the two Sisters be engaged as teachers at the Public School. Mr. Finnegan Unit trustee for Spiritwood presented the proposal by at a board meeting (March 1949). However this was opposed by another trustee. Apparently a growing opposition was being felt at the local level. The matter was discussed and the board decided that the controversial issue should be left until further representations could be made.

A brief was presented on behalf of the Catholic ratepayers. It stressed the desirability of having the Sisters come linguistic (French) basis. A new school was being built, equal opportunity to learn a second language should be given. This was the argument used. Also the local legend the school would be social by and moral y benefitted by the presence of the Sisters.

The arguments (though legitimate as they might have seemed to French Catholics were rejected probably because of the outspoken opposition amongst the ratepayers. The only one aspect it would seem could have been advocated as a minority right - but this issue seems to have been swept under the carpet.

In early 1950 a school board election took place. The issue were drawn. The Catholic candidate lost out. The hope of having Sisters in the new school to meet the legitimate aspirations and needs of the large number of Catholics (fifty four per cent of students) and those of French extraction (fifty two per cent) seemed to have been denied.

SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Catholic ratepayers having been refused what they felt were the legitimate demands of a new public school then taxes had helped build, now seemed to have only one alternative: begin the process of establishing a Separate School District allowed by law to protect minorities in circumstances such as these.

It was spring, 1950. With J. G. Crepeau and their J. M. Charbonneau as their lawyers the Catholics led by Fr. Ruy, (who had replaced Fr. Perron in 1949), began the process. Application to establish a Separate School was made to the Minister of Education. Because the number of Catholic and non-Catholic ratepayers was so close the Department of Education decided it must conduct a complete survey to verify if the Catholics in the new district were truly a majority. The committee pushing the issue in Spiritwood were impressed they wanted their school by September. The survey, by mail, took time - all the answers had to be in. The result, coming only in late June, was that there were twelve few Catholic ratepayers than non-Catholic - a slim majority.

The final step: a legal vote on the issue by the Catholic ratepayers held at a generic meeting called for July 31st 1950. After confirming the affirmative vote, the minister declared the new district of Spiritwood R. C. Separate School District No. 26 and authorized the newly elected board Jacques Ducrot, Fernand Rainville and Arthur Lawrence to operate a Separate School. But there was a catch: it was too late to reorganize the tax base for 1950. Hence the new board would be without tax resources until 1951.

Still the Board and trustee were determined to go ahead and open the school themselves early in September 1950. Three weeks after they were elected the Sisters of the Presentation would arrive. Plans had to be made quickly for locales, supplies, etc.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SISTERS IN SPIRITWOOD

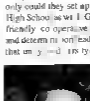
On August 24, 1950 four Sisters of the Presentation of Mary arrived in Spiritwood to become the teachers at the yet unbuilt Spiritwood Separate School No. 26. Sister Louise Anne (Alphonsine Arsenault) Grades nine to twelve. Sister Ste. Marie de Galilee (Simone Perret) Grades five to eight. Sister Jeanne de l'Eucharistie (Huguette Houle) Grades one to four. Sister Francis (Cecile Fluvede) cook, general helper.

Their arrival on the bus in rain and mud was as humble an event as anyone's that go unrecorded. Why then should it now be set down as part of Spiritwood's history? I believe that a more ways than one it was symbolic of the growing pains of our province and of our reach toward a Canadian culture of which future generations will have reasons to be proud.

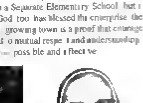
Sr Louise-Anne

The little village of Spiritwood was bitterly divided on language and religious issues. For three years before our arrival the predominantly French speaking Catholic population had struggled to obtain fuller recognition of its demands for French and Religion as subjects at school. In 1950 they were granted the right to set up their Separate School. Of this part of the struggle we were only vaguely aware but as community we were told that Spiritwood had asked for Sisters. We also had visits to classes of the small town and prayed that we might be chosen. Our prayers were answered so only God can answer them now only could they set up a Separate Elementary School but a High School as we'll. God too has blessed the enterprise the friendly co operative growing town is a proof that courage and determination and mutual respect and understanding that unity and tolerance are possible and effective

Sr Simone Perron



Sr Huguette Roule



Sr Cecile Falardeau

However the story not 1950. Let us go back to the bus stopped at the dark very near Mr. Gerard Charlebois butcher shop. There was no one on the street and no one of us had been in Spiritwood recently. As the timid knock on Mr. Charlebois' locked door brought instead no response. At his joyous telephone calls cars arrived and drove us to the rectory the utterly two former garage which Father Gilles Roy [illegible] had chosen as temporary home. There we found him at a meeting with two of our first trustees Mr. Louis Lavoie and Mr. Louis Marin. With Father they welcomed us warmly and showed us to what was to become our dwelling place until April 8 1953 the former rectory just behind and linked to the church

It did not look much like a home. Beds and boxes were piled pell mell both in the kitchen and front room. However as more willing helpers arrived beds were set up units and some order established in what had at first appeared as unimaginable chaos.

The next day Friday we attended our first Mass and had our first view of the inside of the church. A partition had been put up to divide two thirds of the nave lengthwise. Behind this the partition was to be the classroom of Grades five six seven and eight. The younger pupils were to be in the open space. A blue curtain which could be opened for Sunday Mass and drawn for school days later added a small touch of elegance to Grades one two three and four. Grades nine ten eleven and twelve were to be housed at the rectory in what was also our living and sitting room. Such was to be the school until November 19 1951

As that first Mass an interesting incident occurred. Not [illegible] appeared as Sister Jeanne gave the required Latin response [illegible] in her view. One little girl [illegible] of church to see if she was [illegible] When we failed to be [illegible] she could [illegible] nothing but [illegible] awful? Some one talked out loud at church

At [illegible] o'clock several men arrived assuring us every thing would be ready for school on Monday. They completed the part non and built plywood tables that could seat three Church chairs would serve as school chairs. There was such and school hope and good humour among the workers that our hearts rose in spite of the difficulties we knew. There was a [illegible] a rake on. Our school supplies had been ordered and shipped but were now locked in impossible cars. As we [illegible] to place our things meet the parents and register the [illegible] some throughout the day one question always [illegible] all our tense coolness unable to surface for talk at [illegible] What shall teach? What shall I do? Another was [illegible] behind. How will the pupils react to us and to our [illegible] when on the day they first come to our Separate School new Public School [illegible] coming just across the street from us.

On Sunday after Mass work continued and by Sunday evening we had desks chairs blackboards in place. I was to look out on a voluntary basis as the Separate School was built the convent completed the rectory restored

Monday August 28 1950 dawned bright and clear. We were cheered by the open faces and evident good will of the great majority of our pupils who numbered seventy-seven in the [illegible] three pupils all of the same family which are during that first year. The good will also existed at our arrival and on that first day of school never [illegible] but blossomed into many [illegible] friendships I gave to the first Sisters in Spiritwood were by than discomforts those consolations than work and experience never to be forgotten and a host of pleasant memories.

GOD BLESS SPIRITWOOD

Sr Louise Aimee

CONSTRUCTION OF THE SEPARATE SCHOOL

During the summer of 1950 51 volunteers were recruited to cut logs for the lumber of the future building. With the leadership of Arthur Lavoie, Louis Marin and Florence Turgeon, along with the help of many other volunteers the logs were cut. Towards spring, they were sawed. Later when roads dried the lumber was hauled to Spiritwood.

Lumber began to arrive at the construction site on May 27 1951. The next day a bulldozer began the excavation. It was the beginning of the building that was to take shape. J. B. Gouthour was to be the contractor but upon his withdrawal another Manufacturer, Kenneth Trembaly was hired. A debenture issue was floated to obtain funds for the construction along with grants and voluntary labor the building took shape.

By November 17 the two elementary classes came to four and five to eight were able to occupy the new premises though unfortunately the school was not completed. It was on December 7 that the High School students joined the younger set as the occupants of the new Separate School. Total cost of the building was twenty one thousand dollars in cash outlay. But a total value of forty five thousand dollars.

Spiritwood Separate School during construction

Spiritwood Separate School completed

OFFICIAL OPENING, JUNE 29, 1952

Just before he was to leave the diocese Bishop Dupret came to Spirtwood on June 29, 1952 to preside at the official opening. The new school. In the morning some forty-four candidates from the school received the sacrament of confirmation. Then in the afternoon the opening ceremonies took place at the school itself.

Official opening Spiritwood Separate School

Besides the Bishop other speakers were C. Amundrud the superintendent who spoke on behalf of the Department of Education, R. H. Wood, M. L. A. for Turtleford constituency, Fr. G. Roy parish. Before the speeches the school choir sang a French song and after the bless ing they sang "Bless This House". Then the guests entered, signed a register, visited the classrooms and had tea. Some one hundred and fifty guests signed the register.

The Separate School had its problems the first years were filled with finance difficulties. Only because the Sisters worked for practical y no salary was it possible to continue. There was a shortage of supplies, poor materials but a lot of spirit that kept things alive until conditions improved.

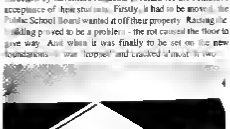
There were moments of glory as well. Despite the adverse conditions, the students of the first years passed their exams. In 1953 Sumone Brunet of the graduating class honored her school by winning the Governor-General's medal for the highest average in the province of the same time she was the A.C.F.C. laureate for highest honors in the French exams in the whole province.

GROWTH OF THE SEPARATE SCHOOL

Another sign of the importance and growth of the school was its increasing enrolment from seventy-seven in 1950 to two hundred and forty-three in 1965. The increase can be accounted for by the gradual closure of country schools and bussing students to Spiritwood. Thus the students from Regent, North Creek and Wellsichan schools were accepted for the 1958-59 term. Before that in 1957 the Sisters were in

their chemicals and students from Laventure. Mildred Rapsome and Ranger were already enrolled at the Separate School.

The increasing enrollment put strain on the facilities and staff. more space and more teachers were needed. With little funding, lay teachers were hired. In July, 1959, a decision was reached by the school board to purchase the two-room public school building constructed in 1936 for the cost of six hundred dollars. It would be purchased and remodelled by Laventure residents in return for the continued acceptance of their students. Firstly, it had to be moved, the Public School Board wanted it off their property. Raising the building proved to be a problem - the rot caused the floor to give way. And when it was finally to be set on the new foundations it was "lopsided" and leaded a "load to two".



Notre Dame Hall

Not finally in place, behind the church it was renovated. Folding doors separated the two classrooms. It became the new High School and eventually would be known as Notre Dame Hall. It was put into use in 1960 and would serve until 1968 as a school, then as a hall until sold to the Pioneer Centre in 1974.

Also in September 1959 plans were made by the Board to accept ten country schools for further classroom space. As government policy gave first choice to local resident groups to buy these buildings, the Board retained the services of the Laventure 4-H club to buy the North Creek school for them.

Similarly a group helped acquire the Winchelton school under the name of the "Winchelton Home and School Corp." when five hundred and ten dollars and four hundred dollars respectively. The two buildings were moved into town on lots just north of the convent, and were ready for occupancy by the end of October 1960.

Another grant play was made in 1962. A new debenture issue was floated for twenty two thousand dollars. Along with eight thousand six hundred dollars in grants this allowed them to begin a four room addition to the original structure. Upon completion, the school occupied the full twelve classrooms.

In the fall of 1965 one of the "cottages" had been closed and the grades nine and ten were combined in one classroom. In 1966 the other cottage school was also closed a room at the convent was used as a classroom. The lots north of the convent were put up for sale by a Board auction of October 1966 (the buildings were not too suitable as classrooms and had probably already been sold).

Cottage Schools.

THE SISTERS OF THE PRESENTATION

The Sisters of the Presentation of Mary are the spiritual daughters of Anne Marie Rivier, their foundress. Though her successors flurry towards the christian education of young people she founded in 1796 in France the order which was to spread to many parts of the world including ours. Only last year 1978 the Sisters celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of their arrival in Western Canada.

In the early 1940's Fr. Feeron approached the then Provincial Superior Sr. Ste Lutgarde to send some of her Sisters to Spiritwood. The obvious reason was to teach in the school especially the teaching of religion and French. But though we cannot read into the minds of the people then we can only guess that they were expecting much more from the community of Sisters.

So it was with ironic justice that parishioners were joined officially through the pastor on Sunday August 27 1950 the first four Sisters to become part of our christian community. Those first especial ones were more than met. It wasn't long before the sacristy, the altar vestments, the lingerie took on a touch of their neatness. It was only one way in which the life the liturgy was enhanced by their presence. The care they have taken of the sanctuary at church the decorations spoke that caring hands had been put to work.

Then what about the music the choir the singing at Mass? Over the years the Sisters have shared their talents and dedication with us. And though in the first years they were looked upon with suspicion they soon established themselves as respected citizens of the larger community. Almost always through these years a music teacher responded to the needs of many beyond our parish. They have

Sp ri wood Conti nu

fifteen boarders were accepted they ate their meals at the rectory-convent and slept at the school

It was back in 195 the school board made a formal request to the Sisters of Presentation that they build a convent here The desire probably was in see them more permanently established Whatever mitgivintions had been started and after some effort Smyrle Grain finally agreed in March 1952 to sell three lots to the convent By May plans were on the drawing board and by June excavation for the building was underway Rosaire Tremblay from Mayo was the contractor During the summer the building slowly became a reality

By until April 8, 1953 was the building sufficiently ready for the Sisters and their boarders and even then much of the building was still unfinished It was on May 14 the the first Mass was said in the convent chapel Before the end of the term the number of boarders had swelled to twenty Only for the beginning of the next term in August could the lower floor be occupied

The official mission came on the feast of the Epiphany January 6, 1954. Surrounded by a number of guests the Sisters witnessed the official opening and bless ng of their convent by Bishop Leo Blais

Over the years the convent was unbuilt and In the summer of 1954 trees were planted landscaping was done Other improvements were done to the interior now and then that kept the exterior looking continuo Only recently in 1978 the convent s exterior was refinished with attractive aluminum siding

Boarders were accepted each year from 1953 to 1956 The number of Sisters jumped from the original four to five then to seven by to eight and is now at seven It would be nice to make a complete list of all the Sisters who have worked in Spanishwood but it would take much space So we tender tribute globally to each and everyone and give thanks for their collective contribution to the life of the parish

For the 1966-67 term the school needed classroom space so the convent opened its doors to one of the classes of students It no longer reserved borders The need for the new ce was domin ting Later when the Separate School sent its Division 4 students to the new High School the

Typica of the added touch they brought to the parish are the re ar ences I n Roy made of them a contribution towards the cel ebration of Christmas 1958 Hi spoke spe cifical y of the music tho c rib and thanked the Sisters Christmas with a difference And since then t would be a parish with a d fference

And the people responded with acceptance trying to help make the Sisters feel at home n the fall of the first years a shower was held to help garden and farm produce to help the ittle community and later the boarders Other parishioners offered other serv ces

The renewal of the Church following Va ican II has also touched the Sisters of Presenta ion Perhaps most noticeable were changes in the habit or dress Bu just as important were changes in their l festyle wh ch made for greater ease in their relat ons with the general pub ic Driving their own cars is one example that has given them greater mobil ty and ease of action The renewa was deeper than these ref ections, the more profound changes must be experienced rather than written about

The S sters are now involved n many facets of parish l fe Some are members of Parish Counc l Committees They va is to the sick the elderly and to other families are appre ciated For years they have offered hot home cooked meals to the pastor

In 1970 during a period of d scussion n Fr Doucette s Sister was granted permission to g ve communion to her community by us ng t s for ng l to the sick Since then they very often help distribute communion at Sunday Mass Since 971 n Sister has been teaching Christian Ethics I Religion) at the Public High School where both Catho ics and non-Catholics enroll n be c asses In 975 was the twenty fifth ann versary of their arriva n Sp rewood, the festiv ties surrounding the occasion are described as part of the history of the Separate Schoo

BOARDING SCHOOL & CONVENT

The Sisters mission appostolic was and is the christ an education of the children at school In the chapters on the Separate School we have mentioned that work But in the e arly years amongst us there were students who without busses and l ving at a distance would not be able to benefit of th s type of education unless they had a place to board near the school

When the Sisters first arrived they were housed n the former rectory (Fr Roy had moved into the redecorated garage They were in cramped quarters especially when we realize that the H gh School classroom was also in the rectory Despite this n January 1952 they accepted their first boarder Yvette Lafond By August for the new term

Sisters found themselves with extra space. In 1973 they decided to offer the use of the large room downstairs for youth use. Since then numerous activities such as Altar Boys Parties, Leaders sessions, Parish Council meetings, and other gatherings have been held there. The chapel in the convent has been used over the years for weekday parish masses.

And so, the convent and the Sisters are part of the parish and clearly history of our history. The Carmelites community eventually would like as see a vocation that may for a long time to come

FR. MARTIN VAN den AKKER
Fifth Pastor

Father Van den Akker first came to minister in the area in 1952 - he years in which he replaced Fr. Dumas as pastor of Lakeshore. Then in 1953 when Fr. Lemaire was forced by illness to retire from Mildred Fr. Van was asked to care for that parish as well. The two drove was a better solution than the sharing at Lakeshore so Fr. Van moved to Mildred. Finally, in May 1954 he became the fifth pastor of Spirit Wood.

After Father Roy's departure in January a period of the Foreign Mission Society Fr. Yvon Guerin stationed at the time in Prince Albert assumed the main spiritual services to Spirit Wood for a few months until Fr. Van's appointment. Between Fr. Van's stay was very short the summer clergy appointments saw Fr. Van go to Arborfield.

During his stay Fr. Van says he learned at least one important lesson you do not run ashes with holy oils may a confluent box. He readily how he almost set fire to the building by such a mistake but corrected it before the near fire began.

FR. WILHELMUS TIMMERMANS
Sixth Pastor

Fr. W. L. Timmermans

Fr. Tim as he is better known came to Spirit Wood in August, 1954, from Hafford Lake. As Fr. Van before him he is a diocesan priest of Dutch origin. He speaks both French and English well and from his pastoral position was able to introduce more English a church services according to the changes in the population without being accused of partisanship.

In his early years of ministry he tells us Fr. Tim believed that parishioners should support their church and pastor through direct contributions. But he soon discovered that the needs surpassed revenue that projects of all kinds were required to keep the parish afloat as well as continue helping the Separate School in outgrowing years. So it was that Fr. Tim became adept at organizing card parties, dances, bingoes, food suppers, and second collections - not to mention bottle drives!

The C.W.L. and K.C.'s became the driving force in sustaining parish projects. Regular card parties during the winter months supports as summer BBQ bingos before Christmas and Easter, parties for the school, a Christmas party for school children, the Knights of the Altar, all helped relieve some of the fund raising and social activities that marked church life in our parish during the latter 1950's and early 1960's.

Fr. Tim also had a system a second collection at Sunday Mass gradually accumulated funds for a specific use needed in the parish. Each project was done by collecting and selling bottles. Maybe the Prince Albert Separate school owes a great help in this field. And ... as many by the proceeds from a C.W.L. - K.C. event were added to the fund.

In this way a new organ was bought and the hot water was reinstalled before Christmas 1957 in total our one hundred seven hundred and sixty-six dollars was raised by July 1958.

Next came the kitchen. It was decided to purchase the following Christmas. In the end two hundred and seventy-six dollars. In 1959 the land was in purchasing was sold for the holy. Then for a new furnace to heat from oil fuel. In the end the cost was one thousand three hundred and fifty - dollars. Whether or not this fund as slag tact a year was raised after this is uncertain.

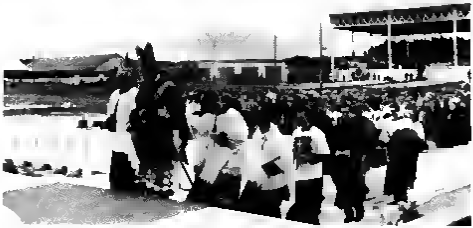
Let us say that since the Fr. Tim was only a land as we have measure. He helped to run near the growth of the Separate School. Though it was in Spirit Wood the School progressed in many ways and he certainly helped this progress. He served as secretary-treasurer for the Separate Board through out his years here.

Another important step was the purchase of a rectory in 1955. The residential quarters at the back of the church were not in the best of condition. On his own Fr. Tim purchased a house from Mr. Lamoget located across the street from the church. After moving he had the wall of the sanctuary in the church opened using the space occupied by the pews once at the back as the sanctuary and sacristy thus giving added and needed space in the church.

To his residence Fr. Tim soon added a TV. One of the first in Spirit wood. I did get of the fans who came to watch wrestling and often chosen programs even though the picture was rather snowy.

1957 was the year of the big diocesan Eucharistic Congress in Prince Albert. All parishes of the diocese were expected to prepare Triduums (three days of prayer and retreat) were preached by Fr. R. Gander in Spirit wood and Fr. A. March him in Mildred. Other devotions to the Eucharist a regular Mass and projects by the school children were all meant to sensitize Catholics to the main festation of

Faith. Which started quite participation were urged to attend as possible. Masses were organized. The Sunday but often gave the program. Attendance July 7 at 7 p.m. the church held a major (at first five minutes) as they did throughout the diocese to mark the opening—the Congress. [A note of interest during the Congress—a young man was ordained who would later become the ninth pastor of Spiritwood, Fr. Henri Renaud.]



7 A Eucharistic Congress.

SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE FIFTIES

The 1950's probably saw the culmination of a growing devotion to Mary in the Church. The months of October and May (Rosary, Stations of the Cross, liturgical prayers to the Virgin) were a part of the spiritual fabric of every parish and Spiritwood was no except on.

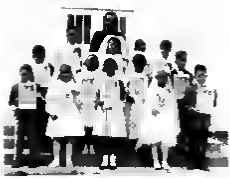
The First Friday devotions to the Sacred Heart were also special because of the parish's dedication to this symbol of Christ's love.

And of course Bishop Blais' strong devotion to the Eucharistic Presence enhanced the already popular exercises of Benediction, Holy Hours, regional and diocesan congresses.

The Separate School brought a community with a community by school masses, confessions, studies, retreats and here religious part of the Graduation Exercises.

Sundays the mass was still in Latin, the priest facing the altar against the wall, his back to the people. But more and more people were encouraged to participate to answer the prayers (authentic reserved to the altar boys) and to sing the

Communion of the mass (previously the exclusive role of the choir). Eucharistic fast before going to communion in the 30's and 40's was to abstain from water and food since midnight. In the late 40's and early 50's this rule was relaxed. Fast water could be taken until three hours before



A communion class in the 50's

communion then solids were allowed and water could be taken anytime. The eventual ruling was, and still is, fluids may be taken until one hour before communion.

These were the first of a series of changes in Church discipline. Friday abstinence was declared. Lenten fast was considerably modified (days of penance (Wyrths and Ember Days) were removed. To people brought up in consistency and inflexibility of centuries old church discipline these changes were almost traumatic what was happening? Was the Church changing its whole life?

What was the reaction in Spentwood to these changes? By what we can hear said of them it seems the reactions were typical: a few felt uneasy others indifferent most were happy to welcome what seemed a long over-due renewal. But the more drastic changes were to come as a result of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council first announced in 1959 when John XXIII succeeded Pius XII as Pope.

A Mass in the 50's

FUND RAISING CANVASS - 1961

It seemed that the time had come for a campaign to alert parishioners of their responsibility for the material well being of their local church. The prosperity days the depression the war years kept most people in this area quite poor. But, post war years were better and though recovery was slow the economy of the region was gaining ground. Typical of the habit of giving little to the Church was its disappearance rapidly as the growth of the economy.

The answer seemed to be a campaign to alert parishioners of the Church's need and their responsibility towards it. A Toronto firm, Cathos was engaged to organize the canvass. Men from both Spentwood and Mildred were brought together into a canvassing committee under the chairmanship of Louis Vey. The ladies had their own committee headed by Mrs L. Delisle from Mildred and Mrs E. Lavasseur from Spentwood. A book at was printed describing the aims canvass.

The goal was to obtain pledges from each and every family for a three year term as we las encourage a higher regular weekly contribution. The purpose of the monies so raised were for a building fund for a new church and rectory in Spentwood and to complete sacristy, organ church and re cilory, etc in Mildred.

Perhaps the canvass did not achieve all it was meant to do but a dad make parishioners aware that their weekly contributions should increase. From the average thirty to forty dollar collections before the canvass the 1962 collections were generally over one hundred dollars per Sunday. Total parish income jumped from three thousand dollars in 1960 to six thousand dollars in 1962. With the increased income monies were set aside, which eventually were used to purchase the rectory from Fr. Tim for the next parish priest.

FR. CLEMENT PROVENCHER

Assistant Pastor

In the fall of 1962 Medicine and Shell Lake were added as missions of the Spentwood Mildred parish. Fr. Provencher came to help Fr. Tim as assistant. He was to stay here for one year.

With two resident priests, the thirty some this happened in Spentwood: the main story was shared On Sundays with four points to cover, it still gave each two or three masses to say.

Fr. Provencher was handy with hammer and saw and used his talents to do some of the remodeling in Notre Dame Hall. After a year Father was not in good health so left to go to Duck Lake for a time. From there his illness would get the best of him and he left to get back to Montreal where he could obtain better medical help.

MILDRED - THE LATTER YEARS

After Fr. Lemaire left St. Albert the Great parish would seem quite be the same. It would have resident pastors for only a few intervals and more often it would be served by priests out of Prince Albert or from Spentwood.

In 1958 Fr. Van der Akker pastor at Lavenure would take over the pastoral care of Mildred as well. As the residence was better in Mildred he moved there returning on Sundays to say Mass at Lavenure. The following spring 1954, Spentwood was also added to his care so he moved again. By July he was appointed to Arborfield and Mildred became vacant.

For almost two years 1954 to 1956 the ministry was assured by priests from Prince Albert. Fr. S. Urbanoak and Fr. Marcel Belanger came. Then in July 1956 it seemed the parish was to have a new beginning. Fr. Roland Goudet became its first pastor. But this didn't last, by November Mildred became a mission of Spentwood, with Fr. Timmons as pastor.

The records give a little more information about these years. 1956 to 1962. The parish had a Ladies' Aid Society. Only a small job in caring for the Church and raising funds. During the winters there were regular bingo and parties. Summer brought the annual church picnic

Mildred church and rectory

usual y at the Delisle farm. During the summer holidays Catechism days were held at the school usual y taught by Sisters from Spiritwood And he annual Feed Supper on y enhanced the cooking reputation of the Mildred ladies. Sunday Masses were scheduled regular y collections yielded eight dollars n ten dollars per Sunday. Some thirty four or forty families made up the parish.

Projects during the period involved patching the stone-masonry foundation of the church enlarging the sacristy, finishing the steeple most of the work done in 1957-58.

By 1962 roads and communications had made distances shorter. Eventually Mildred's school had been closed and children bused to Spiritwood. So when Fr. Tim inherited the mission of Medstead going him four places to say Mass (Shell Lake was also on his list) Mildred was to be closed as a parish. There was a Christmas Midnight Mass there in 1962 but on the following Sunday or New Years day, according to recollections the last mass was said. From then on Mildred became part of Sacred Heart Parish.

In 1970 during the moving of the Laventure Church Mildred Church was reopened briefly for one Sunday mass from July to November then left idle again. By 1975 the building was beginning to show signs of deterioration and after a meeting of parishioners of the area it was decided to sell the building to John Wingerter to serve as a warehouse. The proceeds were to go to renovate the Spiritwood Church. Later Mr. Wingerter moved the building to another religious group in whose possession it now stands.

St. Albert-the-Great Parish has thus faded out of existence. Only the cemetery one mile south of town still remains. The rectory had been sold in 1967.

THE DAYS OF FATHER CAMPAGNA IN LAVENTURE

By the mid fifties things were really beginning to get slow in Laventure. People had moved away, farms were larger, those who were left were travelling to towns for their shopping. The work of the parish would especially be affected when the Catholic students of the area were assimilated into the Spiritwood Separate School. There they would be instructed in the Faith. Father's ministry was therefore a quiet one.

Fr. J. A. Campagna.

While in Laventure Father Campagna began to sympathize with the farmers and even tried an agricultural experiment of raising hogs. Barns became part of the yard at Laventure. Another of his challenges was to make excellent taffy from maple syrup. The writer can vouch for that.

For a second time in just a few years, another young parishioner was to be ordained to the priesthood. Florida Turgeon had joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and had now finished his novitiate and most of his theological studies. Family and friends gathered with the parish to celebrate on December 21 1968. Sisters from Spanwood were in charge of the singing. It was another highlight in the dying years of St. Bonaventure parish.

Ordination of Fr. F. Turgeon

Fr Campagna's story there continued until December 1962. His neighboring pastor Fr Auclair passed away suddenly. Leoville was left vacant. Father Campagna was asked to move and to bring the registers and records of Laventure with him. He would continue to care for the parish from Leoville. Later it was decided to suspend church services in Laventure altogether.

The last Sunday Mass in the St. Bonaventure church was to be during the final week of February 1964. It would remain vacant except for a period in 1970 after the old church in Spanwood had been demolished. It was used for a few Sundays to have Mass. As well a wedding took place there on July 15 1970 for Angie by Father Florent Turgeon for his cousins Noel and Doris.

So really after 1964, parishioners would go north or south for their church services: Spanwood or Leoville. Better roads, better cars, better automobiles, fewer farmers in the area, busing of children to central schools - all were factors to render the country parish of Laventure obsolete.

When Spanwood was in need of a new church building, and began looking at the Laventure building, it was with reluctant nostalgia that parishioners of St. Bonaventure agreed to see it move on. The Bishop permitted the move and in a formal yet unofficial letter dated March 12 1970 he dissolved the parish as a Church entity. The letter explains that since the church is no longer used, since parishioners are going elsewhere for religious services, and after considering the situation, it seemed appropriate to divide the territory of Laventure parish on a line running east and west between Section 17 and Section 8, Township 52, Range 9 West of 3rd. north of this line would henceforth belong to Leoville parish, south, to Spanwood. And the Bishop concludes: "After having studied attentively the situation of the three parishes concerned in virtue of the powers granted me and for the spiritual welfare of the faithful we decree the suppression of the Laventure parish (Christus Dominus Oct. 25 1965 No. 32 and Ecclesia Sanctae Aug. 6 1966 No. 21). Moreover we have decided that the archives of the parish of Laventure especially the parish registers and instrumental documents be kept at the parish of Leoville."

That made it official and the departure of the church has bring in September two of the last entry in the history of the St. Bonaventure parish of Laventure.

FR. PHILIPPE PELLETIER
Seventh Pastor

It was 1966 - twelve years after Fr Tim's arrival in Spanwood. He had spent more time here than any other pastor had or would. Parishioners were getting used to this marvelous outgoing pastor. When he was transferred to Hudson Bay people had a little difficulty adapting to a fifties era type of pastor but equally sincere and dedicated. Fr. Philippe Pelletier

Fr Philippe Pelletier

Fr Pelletier's first decision with the board of trustees was to buy the house which Fr Tim had bought and owned. At the bargain cost price it became officially the parish rectory. The parish did not have sufficient funds so had to get a five thousand dollar loan. In a few years the loan was paid.

The parish also had to look forward to the need of doing something about the church building. The foundations were giving way: the floor had a wavy appearance; it was to all intents and purposes beyond repair. The project of a new building had been mentioned during the 1964 canvass. It was becoming more and more urgent.

Could the parish afford it? The rectory had been paid for - and now an even costlier task lay ahead. Fr Pelletier mentions that he once made a comment, after an interview at Lavendure, that it was too bad the building there was not in Scandinavia! Perhaps the snow was seen, but the actual planning was left to the next pastor.

In 1969, Fr Pelletier left Spiritwood for St Louis.

SEPARATE & PUBLIC SCHOOL AMALGAMATION

Another era was about to begin as far as the Separate School was concerned. Back in early 1965 Catholics at their annual school meeting had discussed the feasibility of constructing a new High School. It was patently a question of space, but also because new curricula were being introduced, especially in the sciences, required laboratory and library facilities.

But the Board and ratepayers faced difficulties. Finances were already hard-pressed. The number of Division 4 students hardly warranted the expense involved, so the Board struggled with alternatives.

Earlier the Public School Board had built a new High School. But it too lacked the necessary lab facilities and did not have a gym. Their number of Div's or 4 students, though larger than the Catholics, was still not high enough to warrant enlarging the facilities.

The two Boards began to meet to examine the possibility of a joint venture. At first fee rates and doubts about each other's position presented a stumbling block to final unification. As a result, the Local Board did not seem to be favourable to any form of amalgamation. It must be noted here that since the Founding of the Separate School, the area of Spirit wood had been transferred to the Medstead Unit.

In 1966 after Spiritwood became a town, the local school board were enlarged from three to five members each. Negotiations were again attempted and after numerous meetings and trips to Regina a mutual agreement was reached.

The High School building would be enlarged by the necessary classrooms. A tuition agreement was reached on the exchange of students between the juniors of each Board. Division 4 and eventually Division 3 students of the Catholic system would go to the enlarged Public School. With the larger number of students the Public School would thus provide better fee rates for all. Some teachers from the Separate School would be hired at the Public School. As well, Catholics were assured the continuing option of religious instruction during school hours to their students.

As chairman of their respective Boards we can give credit to Denis Walker and Ray Michaud as well as to the other members, for seeking to understand and respect each other's position. The goodwill and understanding would as we see it now create a greater mutual trust throughout the Spiritwood community.

So in 1971 the Separate School's first graduation took place. Henceforth Division 4 students would join their counterparts at the Public High School. The building was enlarged, and in the fall of 1972, Division 3 students followed their elders and enrolled in the Public School as well.

By the amalgamation of sectional religious instruction was permitted in the school. A new Christian Ethics program, approved by the Department of Education as a credit course, was primarily developed for separate schools. But it was flexible and was introduced at the Spiritwood Public School (probably a first in the province). St Alban Bites was hired in 1970, and began to teach the program to the seniors. Some Catholics and non-Catholics were enrolling in the optional class. Similarly, broad acceptance has been granted to the yet glaring classes of the pastor level.

The Separate School has evolved through the years. In 1969 a formal agreement was drawn for a thirty three year lease for the property. Visits on from the Church and from there was simply no suspicion or mistrust. As in recent years the principal's task has been in the hands of laymen, whereas it was previously held by Sisters. More recent is finances and in accordance with the wishes of the community the Spiritwood Catholic Separate School is thriving and well.

FR GILLES DOUCETTE
Eighth Pastor

To build a church without having any funds with which to do it, that was the task that confronted Fr Doucette when he arrived in Spiritwood on July 1969. But it did not scare him and it was not very long before he began setting things up.

Fr Gilles Doucette

The solution to the first problem seemed to lie in the solid Church building at Laventure sitting here empty and unused. Before long the whole question of moving the structure was considered plans made and the project underway. It deserves a special chapter of its itself.

Fr Doucette did not limit his attention to the task of obtaining a suitable church building. Church implies many other facets that also must be built with his back getting volunteers, so he got him he strove ahead to renew the parish in many different ways.

The parish already had its Separate School and catechetical programs. Catholic teachers the Sisters had done much for the religious education of the students. The Canadian Catechism with its new approach had been introduced. But through a new emphasis on parent-priest teacher meetings days of renewal for parents interest of the pastor at the

school. Fr Gillies pushed forth a real renewal of vision. The new approach was pursued so as to influence the pastoral approach towards the whole of parish life. During these years Christian Ethics was to the oldest at the High School. Fr Gillies had much to do in this area so will be further written about in the paragraphs about the school.

Children were not the only ones to whom the renewal was directed: efforts were also made to revitalize the various adults had of the church and its teachings. Through his sermons on homeland, Father Doucette gave his people much to think about. But he did not stop there. The Lenten Sundays year after year allowed an opportunity for the adults to hear about and discuss the latest developments in the Church's teachings and discipline. It was also a way of getting adults involved in studying a true local Church community. Many remember the Growth in Faith series of 1971, the Images of Revelation series of 1972, the Building Bridges sessions of 1972. Add to that the Christian Formation Course given to the Knights of Columbus in 1970. Those who about the home Masses on occasions of deepen understanding and participation

The liturgy was in full evolution by this period of time. The new order of the Mass the new Rite of Baptism communal celebrations of Penance were being introduced. As the changes came Father Gillies took time to explain them and still keep pace with the renewal. His instructions on the penitential rite the liturgy of the Word, the rites of Baptism gave new meaning to community worship. His preparation projects for Christmas and Easter included the Penitential Celebrations the introduction of Monasteries, new hymnals and probably many other details now forgotten, brought life to community prayer

Lay involvement was another factor dear to Father Doucette. Already before him lay people had been encouraged to be lectors commentators, or to fill other responsibilities. This was now enhanced and extended to the preparation the decor (e.g. the altarboard giving the theme through of the day or season) the execution of many liturgical happenings

Similar activity was happening in yet another field: outreach beyond the street parish limits. Support was given in A.A. meetings for a time held at the rectory. His parish followed and aided the efforts. Fr Gillies with other clergy in Spiritwood inspired and guided the formation of a Youth Club bringing together teenagers and young couples working in unison towards spiritual service, cultural and social goals. The members involved and the projects undertaken were truly impressive. Some of them in themselves have continued such as the Winter Festival. And beyond doubt the members gained vital experience in community action.

Ecumenism comes to mind when we mention common undertakings with the other clergy. Father Doucette was not very involved in the local ministerial association. There were joint services: Remembrance Day Graduation and other occasions. Many recall the joint preparation and celebration of Christmas 1972, with the United Church congregation, for many it remains a memorable occasion. There were also social projects put on by church groups together, such as the great fowl suppers. Some even remember the political canvass with other ministers ... with mixed feelings

MOVING THE LAVENTURE CHURCH

Already in 1961, it was foreseen that the church building in Spiritwood would have to be replaced. But a rectory was chosen as a priority first purchased by Fr Tim, then by the parish. Now that the rectory was bought and paid for, attention could be focused on what to do about the church.

The decision to close by Fr. Doucette upon his arrival to assess communities to study what would be involved in moving the building at Laventure to Spiritwood. That seemed a heroic attempt we than building a new church from scratch especially if you have no funds with which to build.

On October 13 1969 the committees met Fr. Jourdain from Starkelford was here to suggest plans for the Laventure building. The decision reached and later ratified by the parishioners was to set it and move away the old church and move the Laventure church to Spiritwood. Already by October 26th the parish had also called for tenders to buy and remove the old building. There seems to have been no response for the tenders were renewed the following spring.

During this winter of 1969 70 a first effort was made at raising funds for the project. By the end of April one thousand five hundred dollars had been collected hardly enough to even start the endeavor. The Fund Raising Committee drew up plans for a four-year program. To launch the program he first thing to do was to canvass all parishioners for donations and pledges. This objective was twenty four thousand dollars over four years or six thousand per year this sums estimated would be needed to move, install and renovate the church building. Some thirty five men were to canvass the parishioners from door to door in the week of May 31 to June 7 but the canvassing seems to have dragged on for a few months. By reports some eighteen thousand dollars was pledged a a thousand of which was received enough for the first phase.

Phase I consisted in removing the old church building the foundations and bringing the Laventure church into Spiritwood. The old church was sold to Walter Murray with the provision that a be removed and de-l a burned. On April 26 1970 the parishioners help was requested to move to the Laventure Church all the articles to be salvaged from the old church. It was to be the last time Mass would be said in the 1928 landmark. The building was partially moved away some of the salvaged the rest pushed into the cellar dosed the poured on it, and late set to b under the supervision of the Spiritwood fire brigade

At the beginning of June the new foundations were poured mostly through voluntary help. Everything was now

ready to ta[illegible]ve the building from Laventure [illegible] the members [illegible]k[illegible]s from Saskatoon) were not so much until [illegible] September but the structure finally made its appearance in Spiritwood

The church before demolition

[illegible] church

Moving church

Thanks to the hospitality of the Anglican community Mass continued to be said in Spiritwood on Sundays at their church. Also another Mass was said first at Laventure during May and June) then at Mildred (from July to November)

After the church was set on its foundations and a few alterations made it was opened for worship on November 22 1970 the Feast of Christ the King. So ended Phase I of Moving Church at a cost of eleven thousand with only two thousand unpaid

Phase II saw the building structured the doors and windows repaired the front sidewalk poured the ceiling insulated By May 1972 Phase III was [illegible] paying the balance and doing some finishing. Phase IV began in 1973 was cut short when Fr Doucette was named to go to Duck Lake in August Total cost of work done in the project was near sixteen thousand dollars all paid for and in sight reserve in the fund some one thousand five hundred dollars

PARISH COUNCIL IS PLANNED

Vatican II states that the laity can be called in various ways to a more direct form of co-operation in the apostolate of the hierarchy. [illegible] on the Church No 33) Just as the diocese should have a special pastoral council composed of clergy religious and lay people (Christus Dominus No 27) it is a logical conclusion that parishes should have a similar council bringing together priests religious and laity to share in the mission the Parish Church

In Spiritwood parish as almost everywhere else lay trustees counselled the pastor on the material administration rarely on other matters It is a sad true that the laity were involved in many apostolic and pastoral activities through the C.W.L. the Knights of Columbus and other groups. The Parish Council was created only to enhance the collective responsibility for the Church by pastor Sisters and laity in all areas of pastoral activity

In 1969 when Fr Doucette organized committees for the church moving, got others together to organize the Lenten sessions he put the Youth Group organize a Jewish mass lay two weekend in the liturgy, he was laying the foundation of the future council But it wasn't until the spring of 1973 that he explicitly brought up the topic And in his usual way he was thorough in his explanation of a Parish Council both through his sermons and his Sunday bulletins over a period of a few weeks By June 10 1973 the first draft of a Constitution for the Sacred Heart Pastoral Parish Council was ready for publication

Before anything further could be done to organize the Council Fr Doucette was to leave Spiritwood.

FR. GILLES AUMONT
Ninth Pastor

August 1973 Fr Gilles Aumont arrived from Marcelin to become the ninth pastor of Sacred Heart Parish. It wasn't easy to follow Fr. Doucette. The active period to which the parishioners had become accustomed over the previous four years stopped abruptly. Fr. Aumont's approach was somewhat different. The parishioners seemed to expect the same as before.

Still there was a continuous push forward. Using much of the basic of the Constitution of the Parish Council printed in June elections were held on October 7, 1973. The six members held their first meeting on October 15, and co-ordinators from the groups were appointed. At the committees' lily the end of October the committees were formed and had held their first meetings. The Council was functioning.

Fr. Aumont's general health kept him from meeting the expectations of the Council. But even nally this may have proved beneficial for they were forced into a situation where they fe l obliged to take on many responsibilities hitherto left to the pastor. It also brought together the people for one Sunday Mass rather than two. The committees helped with he finances: the Hungry printing the Sunday bulletin (Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Germann must be mentioned here) and the general welfare of the Parish.

In April 1974, Fr. Aumont left the parish for an extended holiday but as it was to turn out he would be replaced as pastor later in the summer. In the meantime Fr. Gerald Poubert pastor of Leoville took care of this enlarged parish. It meant four masses on weekends besides the other responsible ties. After urgen appeals to the Bishop another pastor was named in late June, but because of previous commitments he could not come to the parish until August.

RECENT YEARS

Fr. H ar Renaud

When Fr. Henri Renaud arrived on August 19, 1974 the parishioners seemed happy to have yet another resident pastor their midst. The newly formed Parish Council was anxious to undertake some of the tasks they had been given. The new pastor gradually became acquainted with the parochial situation.

In September the financial situation was reviewed with the parishioners. They had been generous during the campaign to move the church, but now had let things get lax. The final phase of the program initiated with Fr. Doucette had not really been completed. True some still contributed to the building fund, as well as to a special "organ fund" started during Father Doucette's last year, but with less enthusiasm.

Actually the church the building had been prepared for by October the sod for the town was held. In November and December, the Finance Committee went ahead with a major drive to get the balance of funds needed for a new organ. It was brought to bear for Christmas.

In 1975, the cement steps and side door were completed, paid for by Knights of Columbus. The water connection from the town main to the church was made, and water was available for the new lawn. During the summer efforts centered on celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Separate School which is described in another chapter.

Attention then focused on the priorities of saving the church needed renovations so did the rectory. At the February 1976 parishioners meeting it was felt that the rectory renovations should come first. A special appeal through second collections and donations was launched but failed to engender any great enthusiasm. The Finance Committee studied various options and decided a direct appeal to parishioners was best.

SACRED HEART'S OWN FIVE-YEAR PLAN

By May 1976 it was obvious that another concerted effort would be needed to complete the church building and to renovate the rectory. The Finance Committee endorsed by the Parish Council traced out a five year plan. The objective would be to complete the exterior of the church by siding. What was in the building fund would be used to renovate the rectory or if the present rectory were sold to pay for the balance of a new one.

Needed was an estimated thirty-five thousand to forty thousand or about eight thousand dollars annually. The plan was explained to all parishioners at church and by mail asking for a minimum average of eighty dollars per family each year for the building fund.

The response was good and so the renovations took place as follows.

In 1976 the church roof was re-shingled. In 1977 exterior woodwork on the church was repainted and rectory windows roof steps and the interior were renovated. In 1978 church walls were insulated re lining and walls were fin ished built of the church was remodelled sanctuary furniture was redone. Lighting was changed. floor was carpeted. A vacuum cleaner was purchased as well as a set of drums for the church. In 1979 the sacristy was completely renovated with new cupboards walls carpet and running water hot and cold.

To date the cost has been about forty thousand dollars for the church and six thousand for the rectory. With one year to go we are still within the provisions of 1975. The steeple still needs refinishing. Nothing has been done to the building

system some mention had been made of converting it to natural gas. Later the parish might want to consider doing something about pews. There are three different types now relics of different ages.

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARIES

The silver jubilee of the Separate School was marked with special festivities on July 1, 1975. At the same time, parishioners recalled that it was also twenty five years that the Sisters of the Presentation were amongst us. Trustees, teachers, Sisters, graduates of the number century were invited back to the parish to join in the celebration.

Some former graduates took advantage of the occasion to organize an alumni gathering. On the evening before the jubilee festivities formal grads from the 40's & 50's joined to-gether with friends to re-live their school days.

The next day guests registered at the school office was served. Classrooms were open and decorated with many displays depicting the twenty five year history of the school. Former teachers, student parents shared memories. A festive-occa thanksgiving Mass at the church was offered by concelebra ng former and present pastors and visiting priests Fr. Timmerman gave the homily and various people represented the 4 the area, on shared in the functions.

Shortly after Mass a pancake breakfast was served by the Knights of Columbus at the arena. Then at 2 p.m. a social hour pr gram relaxed and an open mikes lag and humorous flash on the years of the school and of the Sisters' history. In the pan l Trustees were made to trustees, teachers, pastors, ratepayers, students, but especially to the Sisters for the dedication and service.

The festivities concluded with a pl harbecue supper. It was a memorable day that involved every committee of the Parish Council and a large number of other volunteers.

PARISH COUNCIL ACTIVITY

The recent shoveling of church and rectory, the celebration of the Separate School's twenty fifth anniversary may appear as the most obvious work of the Council. But that is only a part of it's ew. We must also consider the less obvious yet no less important tasks of behind the scenes planning of these activities.

Started years before, the programs of catechetics in the school and adult renewal in the parish were continued. The Religious Education Committee worked hard at Lenten Services during the 1974 and in the town and others in 75, '76, '77, '78 and '79 with the help of the Parish. In 1976 an ecumenical Lenten Service on St. Mark's Passion was organized in co-operation with other Spruce wood church groups. The same committee planned pre-Christmas preparation and shared in other joint-committee activities.

Liturgy is an on-going life-force but since its inception the Liturgical Committee has certainly kept it alive and prayerful in the tradition of previous pastors. Guitars, drums, and an organ are a regular part of our community worship. Congregational singing, choir, participation by young and old, special emphasis on liturgical season - all add up to an uplifting praise. The Lord. Penitential celebrations see he regularly before Christmas and Easter. And an effort is made to extend the living liturgy to weddings, funerals and baptisms.

The Social and Apostolic Committee has also worked busy hours ers scope of activity is so broad and unsolicited they have not always known how to become involved. They have tried to help charity get to church, organize social gatherings, church cleaning, lunches after funerals, some celebrations and other diverse activities.

The Finance Committee has the helped Father look after the ord nary admin ra ion as well as the church completion program a ready mentioned.

The centre elected committee meets on a regular basis to act wise st imulate and co-ordinate the activities of all committees. In 1975 its desire to exchange with other Parish Councils led to the workshops in February 1976 and in March 1977 in Prince Albert, gathering representatives from many other parishes in the diocese. I helped in the setting up of the first workshop after having organized the others. Neither other Parish Councils in 1976 and 1979 the Inter-Church Meeting was dropped due to lack of interest of some councils.

THE LADIES OF THE PARISH

We have already spoken of the C.W.L. in the early part of our history. We must now complete that by mentioning them as it's since he age re-established in 1943. Over the years of service many have given numerous years of service just as an example we can mention Annie McMillan and Simone Pelletier who were honored in 1968 as twenty-five year members.

The records of the 1940's are sketchy but it may be assumed that the involvement was similar to that before and after th i decade. In the 1950's and 1960's the ladies were very active in many different kinds of apostolic ventures. Here and as w th the Kn ights fund raising seemed to occupy an important part of their efforts card parties, teas, socials, fowl suppers, bazaars, catering. Cooking turkeys, washing water, washing dishes, serv ng tables were chores that became almost commonplace for them.

But that was not the entire extent of the s ociety. Caring for church c eanliness visiting the sick, community projects, outreaches relat ng to Catholic women on the diocesan, provincial and national levels, missionary work - these were some of their interests. In 1946, they hosted the diocesan

conversion and in later years a couple of regional gatherings of the organization.

With the advent of the 1970's much of their field of activity was absorbed into the scope of the Parish Council. The members shared with their social interest and finally the local C.W.L. faded into non-existence in 1978.

This does not mean the ladies of the parish are no longer active. Many of them are members of Parish Council Committees. The Catering Committee calls on all to help in numerous functions each year. The church renovations in the past few years have been done with the help of hefty contributions from the ladies work. Besides the financial aspect, they do feel it provides the community with a social catering service.

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Besides the C.W.L. the parish organization that has had enormous impact on church life are the Knights of Columbus. Their work has been varied and spans over thirty years of our history. It can be summarized as being a medium through which Catholic men have taken or responsibility in the growth and well being of the Church in our area.

The first mention of Knights in the records of our parish dates back to November 20, 1949 when a meeting was announced at the church. For the first few years they were members of Delsden Council getting together locally for activities here. On August 10, 1952 they organized themselves into sub-council. This gave them more autonomy but they were still affiliated with the Delsden group. They would function that way for the next ten years. Keeping much with the Council by way to back and forth to Delsden.

By 1962 this group grew with forty nine members they applied for a Charter as an independent council. It was granted November 10 1962. Thus was born Sportswood Knights of Columbus Council No. 5353.

Over the years they have been active in helping the local church in many ways. Fund raising has been one important aspect. Through bingos, card parties, dinners, socials they have contributed much towards financing church improvements. In the early 50's they were one of the forces supporting the Catholic Separate School. In 1961 they were very much involved in the general canvass that took place. In 1970 they spearheaded a project to buy a car for the diocesan catechetical field worker. They were there whenever any major project needed their co-operation. And as a society of mutual aid the scope for action went beyond to various endeavours.

As the Parish Council began taking shape they had to search for a new role in the parish and for a time through lack of interest the Council was about faded out. It continued but the persistence of a few kept it alive and it is now on its way to recovery.

MUSIC, SOUL OF LITURGY

Music adds that note of beauty so much a part of community worship. Singing is surely a form of prayer when it is directed towards the Most High or when it exhorts us to Him.

Over the years of our history, liturgical music has evolved. From the solitary organ to the lively guitar or pounding drum each has its own expression of praise. From the Latin and Gregorian chant to the modern vernacular melodies, each with its own adepts.

Cleaning from the records, it seems Fr. Boudier purchased Spruitwood's first organ in 1931 for seventy five dollars, but he wants it would be sent back if not used for by the parishioners. What happened? Later in the years 1935-36 Fr. Burrell speaks of paying a rental fee of fifty cents per month for the organ. They must have decided the organ was finally paid for.

Obvious since the first Mass at Christmas 1928, parishioners by no sung. In earlier times it was reserved for its choirs from the left. Only in the sixties was the crowd really invited to join in the organ was moved down so to invite easier participation. The introduction of the vernacular modern languages into the liturgy brought about more singing in the language of the people.

But whatever the style or the format mass times and soloists have always been important to good liturgy. There have been many who have devoted themselves in these functions through the years. Here in Spruitwood as in the other surround ng churches. We see comple led to mention specially two of these.

The first is Mrs. Julienn Rodrigue who was organist in Midrred for many years. After moving to Spruitwood she continued going to Mi dred Medstead and Laventure with Father Tun to play the organ. We consider she deserves much honorable mention of the length and extent of her dedication in church music.

The other person we want to mention is Mrs. Dorothy Neault. When marrying Leo little did she realize she was also marrying a job in the Catholic Church. The Sundays after her wedding in 1944 were though a non-Catholic she was enlisted to play the organ at the Mass. Until and after she joined the church in 1957 Mrs. Neault had her place before the organ keyboard. It was t until her eyes began reading real problems for her that she reluctantly left from her duties at the organ that was in 1975. By years since then she has been called out of retirement to play at funerals and few other occasions. In 1977 the parish presented her a bouquet of roses and a plaque in tribute for her long and continuous devotion.

As for instruments the parish purchased its first electron organ in 1957 the previous one was falling apart. The cost of the new organ was one thousand five hundred dollars. History from the seventy five dollars paid in 1931 to 1975's new organ was purchased for two thousand five hundred

dellers. Each time the organs were attended at the Christmas Mass. Last year 1978 we also purchased a set of drums. Guitars are owned by the music stu who p ay for us.

As in Field prior to this section let us just add that the Sisters since their arrival in the parish have almost continuously had music teachers. They have shared their talents with the church congregation by directing choirs, teaching others to play the organ and guitars, play ng themselves and doing the many tasks that are linked to the execution of good church music. So here again we are indebted to them.

UNSUNG HEROES

So many have contributed so few of us have been recognized. There is an old hon n the military world in have a salute to honor the unknown soldier representative of all those who died but remain unnamed. This chapter could be called the page of the unnamed heroes of our parish.

We have awarded naming to many people who worked long and hard for the Church n ou ecent Lawrence St. Stephen s Middend Bar' orators of their lives. The Separate school had its board with the devoted efforts of people. Then there were the teachers those of the lar y days in the country schools and those of later years. There were the Sisters of Presentation and other Sisters who came to teach in the summe they too have not been named. Organ tunists such as the C W L the K C s the Sacred Heart League the Committees of Parish Council the Knights of the Altar and others we may have forgotten they had their presidents, their leaders and their membership. The musicians the choirs and other forms of lay m nistry involve parishi Even if we did have comp ete records how could we list all the names? And what of the silent and unobserved contributors to parish l fe?

The names we have mentioned in this book are there fore to be taken as representative of all those who are unnamed. If their names appear, they are not in creation y the mere discovering nor the most important. Their mention helps to give a concrete n a real sn to the t ewnth n face behind which stands so many others the amazing heroes of our history.

GOLDEN JUBILEE

And now we celebrate the go den anniversary of our parish. Truly we do want to celebrate the love of God for us as it has been manifested through the years. We also look forward with confidence to the future trusting that the generations to come will also have reason to celebrate fifty years down the road.

To end s ong composed locally for our an niversary meant to be sung to the tune of Long Long Ago.

Fifty years have gone by
since this parish was founded
That was long long ago long ago
With hard work and devotion
soon churchbells resounded
Long long ago long ago

With a history so old
many tales could be told
Just a look through the files
Bring back memories and smiles
The start of this venture
Began in Lawentare
Long long ago long ago

A big thanks to the pastors
who came through the years
Long long ago long ago
It soon began show ng
the parish was growing
Long long ago long ago

From hard work in the woods
they built a church n Sp nitwood.
That was the start of our Sacred Heart
Now we join w th a lation at th s celebration
That started long long ago long ago

PASTORS

J A Beaulac	1929	May 10	1934
Nicholas Burrell	May 13	1934	Sept. 14	1940
Replacements				
H M Dussault o m i	Oct	1940	Mar	1941
L. Bussiere o m i	Mar	1941	Apr	1941
A. Dumas o m i	Apr	1941	Dec	1941
N M Feeron o m i	Dec	1941	Aug	1949
Gilles Roy o m i	Sept	1949	Jan 24	1954
Replacement				
Y Guerin	Jan	1954	May	1954
Martin Van den Akker	May	1954	Aug	1954
W G Timmermans	Aug	1954	Aug	1956
Clement Provencher Asst	Aug	1962	Aug	1963
L. P Pelletier	Sept	1966	July	1969
Gilles Doucette	July	1969	July	1973
Gilles Aumont	Aug	1973	Apr	1974
Replacement				
G Fournier	Apr	1974	Aug	1974
Henri Renaud			Aug	1974

N.B 1940 Fr Burrell became ill he was temporarily replaced by Fr Dussault who stayed until March, 1941 then Fr Bussiere came for a few weeks followed by Fr. Dumas serving the parish from Lawentare. In 1941 after Fr Burrell had passed away of cancer Fr Feeron was named pastor.

1954 The parish was without a pastor for a few months Filling in during this time was Fr Yvon Guerin p m e

1973 Again with a resident priest for a few months This time Fr G Pouliot fil ed in from Lourdes

TRUSTEES

Jules Sarrazin	1928
Luc Sasseville	1928-29
Nap Ranger	1928 29-30
Charles Maupetit	1929-30-31
Serge Fournier	1930-31 32
Leon Perras	1931 32
Philippe Fransoeur	1932-33 34
Ernest Sarrazin	1933-34
Pierre Boutin	1933-34 35
Louis Cyr quer	1935-36-37
Paul Cote	1934-35-36
Wilfrid Ducrette	1935-36
J C Duval	1937 38-39
G E Audette	1937 38-39
G Charlebois	1939 39-40
Charles Vallee	1939
Art Levesque	1940
John Labelle	1940
Thomas Collins	1941-42-43
Mathias Sarrazin	1941-42-43-44-45-46-47
Louis Vey	1941-42
Luc Sasseville	1943-44-45-46-47
Hylas Fontaine	1944-45-46-47
F Rabot	1948-49-50
J R Schell	1948
R Cornet	1948-49
Isadore Doucet	1949-50-51 52
J B Bussiere	1950-51 53 53-54-55
P Duneau	1951 53 53-54-55
Bruno Belanger	1955-56-57
R Cornet	1956
Romeo Frenette	1956-57 58
Henri Doucet	1957 58
Pierre Francou	1957 58-59
Mathias Sarrazin	1958-59-60
Joseph Ornac	1959 60-61
Paul Bonneau	1960-61-62
Roland Chalifoux	1961 62-63
Guy Houde	1962-63-64
L Vermault	1963-64
Jean Beauchesne	1964-65-66
Marcel Etcheverry	1965-66-67
Candide Poulin	1966-67-68
Robert Marion	1967 68-69
Ignace Schaan	1967-68-69-70-71 72 73
Paul Bonneau	1968-69-70
Mervin Sonnenstein	1969-70-71
Albert Willick	1970-71-72-73
Jean Gallette	1971 72-73

PARISH COUNCIL - ELECTED MEMBERS

Corrie Peterson	1973 74 75 76-77 78 79
Ignace (Ned) Schaan	1973 74-75-76
Bert Turgeon	1973 74-75
Yolande Houle	1973 74-75
Robert Mastofant	1973 74-75 76-77
Sister Pa Brochu	1973 74
Sister Emma Rousseau	1975
Jean He sler	1975 76-77
Jeannette Ouellette	1976-77
Armand Smith	1976-77 78
Robert Mason	1977 78-79
Beatrice Turgeon	1978 79
Joyce Wylie	1978 79
George Willick	1978-79
Steve Simon	1979

PARISH COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Too numerous to mention they are volunteers enlisted to serve on five differnt comm ttees that cover the various facets of local church life They remain like so many others in our history as the unnamed heroes

BISHOPS OF PRINCE ALBERT 1929-79

Joseph-Henri Prud homme	1924-1937
Reginald Duprat	1937 1952
Lee B as	1953 1959
Laurent Morin	959

POPES - 1929-1979 1929-1979

Pius XI	1922-1939
P us XII	939-1958
John XXIII	1958 1963
Paul VI	1963-1978
John-Paul 1	1978
John Paul II	1978-

Present day Separate School

The restored convent

Our church inside

Our church outside

1929 - 1979

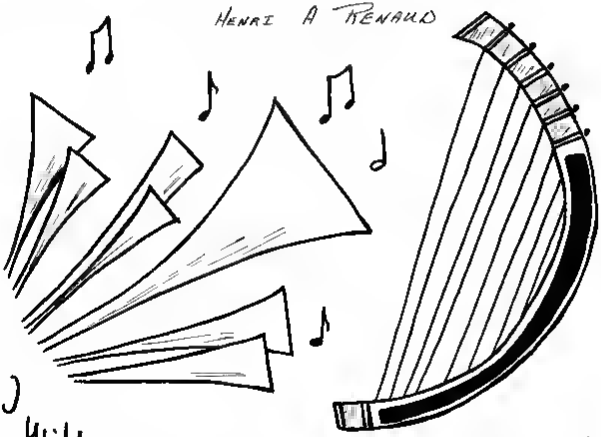
Sacred Heart Parish

Spiritwood - Sask.

THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

Sacred Heart Parish - Spiritwood

— Author —
Henri A Renaud



I will celebrate Your Love forever, Yahweh

Ps. 89

DEDICATION

To write this history to print this book
has required the help of many
To single anyone for thanks would
be to forget someone else

To make that history to live its events
has required the courage of many
To single anyone for praise would
be to miss someone else

We therefore dedicate both this book
and the years it recalls
to the Author of all
May we celebrate His love forever!

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Printed by
Turner Warwick Printers Inc
1979

NEW BEGINNINGS

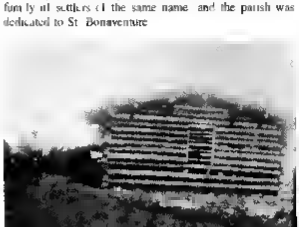
A new land! The search for a new home can almost be said to be scriptural. Abraham left his family to search for a new start. The People of God would later seek through the wilderness their land of milk and honey.

Who knows if it was not similar incentives that pushed pioneers to find new homes in northern Saskatchewan during the latter 1800's and early 1900's? With land in the south all gobbled up, settlers pushed further and further north into the parklands. Fort à la Corne, Duck Lake, and Prince Albert became places on the map. And with the settlers came their Faith, their religion and their priests.

One of the first contacts with catholicism this region seems to have had was the result of the Oblate mission at Muskeg Lake (Aldima) established sometime around 1878. As the settlers came north, the priests of the mission tried to keep in touch and to say mass in their homes. Father Simonin visited the settlers near the present day Mildred as early as 1919 or 1920. He said mass at the Coderre's as well as at the Simonin's in the Shell Lake district.

In 1912 another mission opened to the north-east at Shell River (now known as Victoire). There is evidence that their pastor, Fr. Voisin visited the Laventure area as early as 1914 and returned regularly, at least near Christmas and Easter, to baptize, preach, marry and say mass.

Officially however, it was not until 1925 that a parish was founded in our area. Father A. Tombu became the first resident priest in the region. Laventure was named after the family of settlers of the same name, and the parish was dedicated to St. Bonaventure.



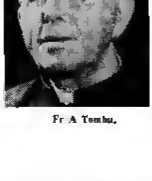
A settler's castle.

LAVENTURE

The history of Laventure is closely linked with that of Spiritwood. To begin with, St. Bonaventure Parish gave birth to the parishes in Spiritwood (1929) and in Leoville (1930). The parishes continued to exist side by side until the latter 1960's when a shift in the population changes in the area and greater ease of transportation led to the closure of the Church in St. Bonaventure. Many of the parishioners came south to Spiritwood for religious services. Finally in 1970 an agreement was reached through which the church building came south, and became our place of worship. Laventure's history is part of the fabric of our history.

Laventure parish was opened as we said in 1925 when Fr. A. Tombu was appointed there as resident pastor. From that location Fr. Tombu would travel south as far as Norbury, east as far as Shell Lake, west as far as Midnight Lake; he would visit, minister to the settlers bringing them the Eucharist. His Mass Schedule for the third and fourth weeks of Advent, 1926 is rather interesting:

3rd Sunday: Laventure
Monday: Bellbutte
Tuesday: Glenbush (at Wanoffe's)
Wednesday: Midnight Lake (at Cadrain's)
Thursday: Junot (at Ledinski's)
Friday: Laventure
Saturday: at Sarrazin's
4th Sunday: Rat Lake (at Turgeon's)
Monday: Shell Lake (at Simonar's)
Tuesday: Norbury (at McMillan's)
Wednesday: back to Laventure



Fr. A. Tombu.

Fr. Tombu continued as parish priest at Laventure until 1930. He would be then moved to Fairholme, from where continued serving much of the area mentioned above, including Norbury for a few years.

NEW CHURCH AT SPIRITWOOD

During the summer of 1928 Fr. Joseph A. Beaulac, newly ordained, was appointed assistant to Fr. Tombu. By the records it is obvious that he was given the care of the mission that would become Sacred Heart Parish of Spiritwood. The

location of the new church would be block No 8 purchased from the C N R for forty dollars paid in November 1930

Luc Sasseville and wife

Plans were made and the construction of the first church building got underway It was built through the voluntary labours of the parishioners The excavation for the foundations were started in November (volunteers included Willie Gagne Emile Turgeon Serge Fournier) Luc Sasseville was the head carpenter and directed the work of crews that numbered twenty to twenty five men at times Despite illness and despite the cold weather Mr Sasseville kept things going and his fine labours received a grand total of one hundred dollars during November and December of that year

The church about 1930

Some of the timber had been cut the previous winter by parishioners and was sawed at a mill operated by a Mr Bell at Bellbutte More lumber was purchased from the same Mr Bell The new structure was of wood sixty by thirty feet with a twenty by twenty foot sacristy residence attached to the rear The shell of the building went up rather rapidly

Though far from complete the new church was ready for the Christmas Midnight Mass of 1928 An impromptu choir directed by Mrs Maurice Beaulac was quickly organized and after a lengthy twenty minute practice sang at Spiritwood's first midnight mass Apparently Fr Beaulac with his own sense of humour called one of the parishioners forward during mass and whispered Qu'ils chantent donc mal! ("They really sing terribly") The choir was not told of this remark until after the mass was over when they could laugh more comfortably about their performance

THE PARISH IS BORN

By January 1929 the mission was well on its way to becoming a parish district and independent from Laventure In Spiritwood's first register we find the following announcement by Father Beaulac Baptisms Church of the Sacred Heart of Spiritwood Sask Founded January 10 1929 Was this the day a division was made at request parishioners' status We cannot ascertain but we do have evidence that it was not until March 3rd 1929 that a meeting was held to formally request the establishment of the new parish

Nap Ranger and wife

Charles Manseau

The trustees for Spiritwood journeyed by horse and sleigh to Laventure and there met with the pastor and trustees of the mother parish along with their own pastor to be Fr J A Beaulac Common boundaries were determined and a request drafted to the Bishop asking him to approve the separation of the two parishes Signing for Laventure were the pastor Fr A Tombu and trustees H Renault and

J R Allard for Spiritwood Fr Beaulac Luc Sasseville Nap Ranger and Charles Manseau Following the meeting we are told the participants shared in a large glass of wine celebrating the event According to eye witness testimony the trip in the cold back to Spiritwood was quite jolly!

The boundary between the two parishes was decided as being a straight line dividing Sections 24 of Range 10 and 11 Township 51 the north half of the sections belonging to Laventure the south half belonging to Spiritwood The official request is imprinted with the seal and signature of approval by Joseph H Prud homme bishop of Prince Albert and Saskatoon July 8 1929

TITLE OF THE NEW PARISH

The parish was dedicated from its beginning to the Sacred Heart However there are some indications that it had been previously considered to dedicate it to the Canadian Martyrs The first book of accounts for Spiritwood opened on August 31 1928 has on its cover page the inscription Mission of the Canadian Martyrs

This would seem to be corroborated by the desire the French speaking citizens of the time had to name the new post of "Fre Goupil (rf to "Progress of Spiritwood" by Bert Fackin) Rene Gonpil was indeed one of the martyrs – a layman of New France put to death by hostile Indians In a Laventure announcement book there is an entry for June 4th 1928 indicating the name of Rene Goupil as a topic to speak about to parish oners – why? Could it be because of the intent on to name the new parish in his honor[1]

Why then was the parish not dedicated to Rene Gonpil or the Canadian Martyrs? perhaps it was because they had still not been canonized by the Church that would come in 1930 As for the community the name Gonpil also lost out and the name of Spiritwood was chosen this name already designated the area at least as early as 1926 (the announcement book of Laventure announces a Mass for Spiritwood on the 5th Sunday after Easter)

The Canadian Martyrs.

The Sacred Heart –

THE FIRST PASTOR: FR. JOSEPH A. BEAULAC

Pr J A Beaulac

Ordained on May 6 1928 in Sudbury Ontario where he had completed his theological studies he then came west to the diocese for which he had been ordained Prince Albert His first task was that of being Bishop Pruds homme s secretary one of the qualifications of which was the ability to drive the Bishop s car Fr Beaulac characteristically daring and determined had said he knew how to drive though his experience had been minimal

The real test came on a trip from Muskeg to Bear Lake The roads were terrible and the automobile landed in a slough tipping the Bishop driver and other passengers into the water Not long after Fr Beaulac received his appointment to go to Lavenirre Someone joked that the bish p would feel safer with another driver!

In the summer of 1928 he became the assistant to Fr Tombo at Laventure and by August it was obvious that he was in charge of the mission known as Spiritwood The railroad was coming the townsite had been determined the Catholics had chosen a lot for the first church building

Some parishioners had cut logs the previous winter for lumber and it was now time to start construction of the edifice Father Beaulac was there to lead it all A young man with much energy determined he spearheaded the project and set about to find the funds to lead it to completion

He began coming to say mass in Spiritwood in August The foundations were laid and the structure took shape By Christmas it was sufficiently completed to have the Midnight Mass in the church Father had taken up residence in the rear part of the building - rooms that were not too spacious poorly insulated and furnished very meagerly To keep warm during the night he made use of the heavy horse blankets of the day!

As time went on he set up the newly formed parish of the Sacred Heart Oddly enough baptisms marriages funerals were still recorded in the Laventure register until May 1930 why? It is a puzzle was it because there was a feeling it would not be a viable parish?

Fr Beaulac could be termed a persistent organizer those first years were filled with card parties bazaars picnics fund raising He was a pusher parishioners were not allowed to hang back and if they did he could be blunt The same applied to the liturgy the style of worship the parish visits Father was methodical and determined From some of his parishioners he reaped admiration from others his strong stand was somewhat offensive So these years were marked by giant strides in setting up the parish and at the same time undermined now and then with controversy

When his brother Maurice married a local girl Irene Bureau and settled in Spiritwood Father Beaulac moved in with them on First Street West! The rectory was left to be used only as a sacristy and winter chapel from 1933 until 1934 when Fr Burelle would replace the first pastor

MANY OTHER "FIRSTS"

Of those in a new community in a new church there are many firsts We have already mentioned the first pastor the first trustees the first Mass the first choir It was not long before the first baptism took place In the new church on January 13 1929 Fr Beaulac baptized Joseph Bruno Laurent Francois born January 6 son of Philippe Francoeur and Blanche Poirier Godparents were Bruno Belanger and Gilberte Gregoire

In June of the same year the first funeral was that of Victor Doucette whose descendants are still among us

It was in August 1929 that wedding bells rang for Henry and Irene Doucette Fr Beaulac was the officiating priest

Henry and Irene Doucette
50 years later

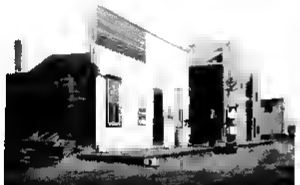
The first official pastoral visit and celebration of Confirmation by Bishop Pruds homme took place on November 6 1932 Mr and Mrs Pierre Boutin acted as sponsors for the thirty six young candidates confirmed In the register writing about his visit Bishop Pruds homme writes Friday Nov 14 1932 departure alone from Prince Albert on board the C N R Arrival in Spiritwood at 1 15 p m Official reception at the church at 3 30 p m Splendid address by Dr Ayotte telling in broad strokes the history of the parish confirmation immediately following High Mass on Sunday

Nov 6 For local reasons we have not blessed the church on this occasion we will bless it later

Bishop Prud hommed return for another pastoral visit in 1935 and a note is meinded in the register saying Before High Mass blessing of the church at 10 30 a m Sunday August 4 1935

FIRST YEARS

The early years were difficult 1929 saw the beginning of the world wide great depression Though the railroad had come to Spiritwood and businesses began to locate in the village it could not be considered as a prosperous area Crops were often small frost was often a factor Then the area was hit by the drought that plagued the prairies of Western Canada Wheat prices were low some sold it for as low as twenty eight cents a bushel In 1937 some of the crops were as small as two bushels per acre



Spiritwood — early days.

The parish had its growing pains finances were truly scanty But Father Beaulac was a persistent organizer Al ready in the fall of 1929 a giant bazaar was organized and by the records more than one thousand dollars was raised Along with receipts of parties held in various homes and with the annual dues averaging three to twelve dollars per family per year plus the Sunday collections (which in 1929 30 yielded anywhere from three to ten dollars rarely more) the church gradually was embellished and expenses paid

In 1930 it seems the parish borrowed fifteen hundred dollars and in as much as we could tell by the records this amount had not yet been repaid in 1938 (Five hundred dollars still remained to be paid when Fr Roy arrived in 1949) By that time four years interest was also owing Add to that the fact that the pastor s salary (one hundred dollars per month) was not fully paid At the annual meeting on February 14 1937 the minutes deplores the difficulty of the parish to meet its obligation especially towards the pastor

From the sacristy the first residence of the pastor he then moved to a house on First Street West But in 1934 it was back to the sacristy this time a new Twenty foot addition that had been added to the church

An appeal that was constantly made was for firewood Wood provided heat for church and rectory thoughout the 1930 s and the 1940 s Most of it was donated and the pastor had to remind the parishioners of this need In one instance at least Fr Burrell mentions that if it is cold in the church it was because of lack of wood The cold probably stirred the generosity of the members of the congregation to bring in some wood The same problem of wood shortage was re corded in the fall of 1942

The diffienlties were not all financial Those of us who would like to recall the good old days must admit that some human weaknesses now obvious were also present then There were conflicts and friction Pastors were sometimes very strong in their attacks on those" faults" we might even overlook today Some were told quite bluntly what they must do or else Excluding someone from his pew when it remained unpaid was one example Conflicts such as one that arose over the election of the trustees in 1931 did not help the spiritual growth of the parish

In 1933 a controversial fire occurred at the church The pastor came one morning to the church to find it filled with smoke The parishioners were alerted and they began to haul pails of water to put out the fire Fr Beaulac tied a rope around his waist and went inside to recover the Blessed Sacrament fortunately he made it back out without great harm It was discovered that a person or persons unknown had set cans of oil on fire tied to the beams under the floor of the cellar The results were a few holes burnt through the floor and a lot of smoke damage The church was repaired without anyone really knowing by whom or why the arson It was certainly an occasion for all kinds of suspicions and suppositions perhaps even a few accusations but no real conclusions

If we recall these struggles it is not to reopen old wounds nor to depreciate the past It was a time of heroism but it was not without its failings And through it all depression crop failures human frailty the parish survived and even grew stronger

THE PEOPLE

A parish is people families of believers not only united with others and amongst themselves to work as a community but also to pray to worship and to discover God together The Catholic community in our area gathered here from far away places

A first significant group came to live here from the Marce lin district e g the Sarrazins the Ouellettes the Cotes the Rangers the Lalondes the Manseaus the Vallees the Nevues the Marins Soon they were joined by settlers from Vonda (Sassevilles) Quebec (the Belangers) and many other places

The railroad — and people —

A major group of parishioners were from a mass through Perhaps the breakup of the Austro Hungarian Empire as a result of World War I had a direct influence on our parish Whatever the reason a large number of Hungarian families immigrated to Canada and in the 1920 s many settled in the south of Spiritwood most of these being of the Catholic faith

The depression in other areas of the province led others to come further north and take up land in the yet uncleared areas around Spiritwood

By 1929 the makeup of the population was complex It is difficult to place exact numbers on the total Catholic population at this time But with the surrounding areas served by the parish of Spiritwood the numbers of families would seem to have been considerably higher than it is today In 1929 for example all settlement states there were two hundred and thirty Catholic families If we hundred people of Hungarian origin living just south of Spiritwood In 1930 in a letter to the bishop it stated that there are two hundred Hungarian families in the south forty families in the Mildred area seventy families in the Medstead area Add to that another seventy five to one hundred families in the immediate Spiritwood and Britannia area and we see that the Catholic population was higher than it is Even if we presume the figures given are inflated the numbers are still impressive

Confirmation at St Stephens

CHURCH LIFE OF THE 1930's

The Mass was and still is the central act of worship of a Catholic community In the first years priests visited homes and celebrated the Eucharist with the family and their neighbors e g Jules Sarrazin s home or the Martin Orosz home As the communities became better organized a church was built (Laventure 1924 Spiritwood 1928 St Stephens 1932 Mildred 1934) Then the Catholics of these areas gathered on a regular basis in their temples to worship

Other spiritual events were first the celebration of the sacraments baptisms confirmations confessions weddings as well as funerals Various forms of devotions played a much more important part than today in the spirituality of the people Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament was a typical devotion either following the Sunday Mass or combined with the recitation of the rosary or the Way of the Cross on Sunday afternoons or evenings

Some devotions were a once a year exercise Most of us still remember the Corpus Christi Procession of the Blessed Sacrament a practice which lasted until the late 1950 s Forty Hour Devotions were two days of continuous adoration of the Blessed Sacrament parishioners taking the various to

Grosse Isoine ... prepared for Mass

pray on behalf of the community. It was also an occasion for neighbouring priests to gather, help each other with confessions and preaching, thus giving the parish a spiritual boost.

Then every now and then a retreat (or mission, as it was sometimes called) was a part of parish life. For example, the one preached by Fr. R. Dupratt June 21 to 28, 1931 (Fr. Dupratt would later become the third Bishop of Prince Albert). A retreat usually consisted of a Mass and conference (or sermon) in the morning, with exercises, prayers and conference in the evening, lasting for over a week. It gave an opportunity to review the teachings of the Church and allow the parishioners to renew themselves spiritually.

Religious education - or catechism, obviously is always an important part of church life. In 1931 Fr. Beaulac announced catechism at 2 p.m. every Saturday for almost one year in preparation of the confirmations that took place in 1932. In other years, catechism classes were held after school hours at the school. In the missions, catechism was also taught.

Though the basic teachings of the Church may not have changed, the mode of preaching seems to have done so.

Father Ferron at Grosse.

Announcements and even complete sermons of the 1930's are kept in our parish records. The "moral issues" preached would perhaps surprise the younger generation of today. Scandals in the parish were severely reprimanded: the abuse of alcohol, public dances, hanging out in the town cafe, boys and girls playing ball together.

Dancing seemed to be singled out as the most blatant moral evil. More than once it was criticized, not to say condemned by the pastors of the day. And when a public hall was built in Spiritwood, the problem became serious. The work of Satan would certainly be unleashed!

To get a little of the mood of the times, let us quote from sermons of the 1930's: preached in Spiritwood: it is a scandal for young ladies and young men to play ball together; it endangers the respect; if these young women and is a trap put on by the devil against their modesty." And while the area became a part of the dust bowl: the drought — the anxieties — all hunger we have called upon ourselves because of our sins" and the sins applied to the loose morals of the day.

Another reference which could be amusing was the condemnation (or close to it) of the young men and women bathing together at the C.N. water hole ... or the young ladies and young men returning from picnics together in the back of a truck under the cover of darkness.

The problem of drought, hard times did not seem to hinder the use (or abuse) of alcoholic drinks. If alcoholism is a problem today in our community, it already was so in the 30's, at least if we trust the frequent references pastors made of it. Some of the liquid seems to have been of the homemade variety, and some parishioners apparently were pushers as well as users.

And the pastor might be consoled to learn that getting people in New Year's Day Mass was already a problem fifty years ago! The Eve Party does not seem to be a recent invention.

It was still an era when Catholics were encouraged to be a relatively closed community. Preservation of the Faith of religious practises seemed to be threatened by association and especially by courting with the protestants. (a term that included all non Catholics).

CHURCH SOCIAL LIFE & FINANCIAL PROBLEMS

The material welfare of the local parish was difficult, as we have stated. Many means were taken to raise funds. Church dues and collections did not meet the needs - so each year projects were organized to bring in the extra income required.

These church activities also made for a social life during the 30's. Each fall the bazaar brought together the parishioners; income surpassed expenses - but with the exception of the 1929 bazaar, the results were not sufficient to satisfy the material requirements of the parish.

During the long winters there were card parties basket socials and other get togethers in the homes They provided social life and brought amounts such as seventeen twenty two and twenty nine dollars Some suppers brought in seventy five and fifty nine dollars

In the summer it was picnic time the church picnic may have been the predecessor of the "Sports Day" of the present It too helped to bring in a few dollars and permitted the people to amuse themselves in the midst of the hard times

Movies were also announced as entertainment in the 1930 s e g The White Sister feature attraction from Sept 23 to 26 1931

A more controversial way of raising funds was the rental of church pews or chairs In the early 30 s six chairs in the church could be rented for five dollars per year Each family was assigned their pew or chairs and if you did not pay the annual fee you could be faced with coming to church and finding your place taken (or even the chairs removed) In our day and age it seems like a weak system and sure enough it did cause hard feelings now and then

C.W.L.

Speaking of suppers and other projects to raise funds we cannot help but think of the Catholic Women's League Besides providing a core of dedicated ladies in the parish the services they rendered to the local church cannot be suitably described They kept the local Christian community alive without them the pastor would have had even greater problems

The history of the C W L as a local organization goes back to the early 1930 s The records that we have on hand do not reach that far back but in the church announcements reports etc we have indications here and there referring to the C W L e g on April 21 1935 an announcement of the reception of ladies into the C W L in 1936 mention is made that there are thirty members in the C W L in 1937 the C W L are in charge of a supper in 1938 Mrs John Labelle is president and finally in 1941 the C W L was dissolved and the group combined as the "Ladies of the Altar"

The 1935 Bishop's report of his pastoral visit to Mildred says We thanked the ladies of the C W League for the parochial banquet that they had prepared at the cost of real sacrifices"

By these bits and pieces of information along with the references made to parties suppers picnics work at the church (cleaning etc) we can pay tribute to the ladies of the day for being true pillars of the Church maintaining its life through their hard work and dedication

We might add that in the late thirties a few references are made of a junior C W L single young ladies who along with their older counterparts took into charge many services for the church activities

MEN'S ORGANIZATION: SACRED HEART LEAGUE

If the women contributed much to the subsistance of the parish the men were not altogether absent The "Sacred Heart League" was a men s organization mentioned in the parish announcements of the 30 s In 1936 it had a membership of forty

What their work was all about is not too clear From the information we can glean they were called upon to provide the manpower for the picnics bazaars decorating (e g for the Corpus Christi procession) services at mass and perhaps much more Little written information still remains The Bishop does mention them in his reports

When did the organization fade out? It is a fact lost in the pages of history

FR. NARCISSE BURRELL

Second Pastor

"The Rev N Burrell M A Ph D arrived in the parish of Spiritwood with Rev C A Vizmathy seminarian Friday May 11th at 5 p m 1934" (From an early announcement book)

Fr Burrell had been ordained in 1924 or 1925 Because of poor health he had been refused ordination in his home diocese Accepted in the Prince Albert diocese during his first appointment at Wakaw he made good a promise he had made to build a shrine to the Little Flower Theresa In 1929 he left for two years of study in Budapest Hungary (his contact with the numerous Hungarian families in the Wakaw area must have been the incentive) When he returned to Canada he was sent to Albertville a parish he himself says he enjoyed But his ability to speak and to write Hungarian undoubtedly was considered in naming him as pastor of Spiritwood with St Stephen's as a mission in 1934

Cecil Vizmathy who arrived with Father Burrell was a seminarian from Budapest he was to spend time here to study theology under the guidance of the pastor leading to the priesthood His mother and sister also came to Spiritwood and lived in a small house near the rectory Eventually Mrs Vizmathy did some of the housekeeping chores at the rectory

The success of this "summary experience" in Spiritwood broke down two years later Difficulties arose and Cecil wrote the Bishop for aid to return to his native land along with his family in 1936

When he first arrived here the rectory was hardly habitable so Father Burrell stayed for a few months with the Benilac s During that time the twenty by twenty foot structure at the back of the church was enlarged to the full width of the church made to have two floors and became the rectory as it stood until the 1950 s The renovations and work were done sometime after August of 1934

The years that Fr Burrell spent were difficult Poverty was a real problem After remodelling the rectory furnishings had to be procured people did not have any money And with the crop failure of 1937 things did not improve

Fr Burrell had support of friends and family in the Maritimes and with their financial aid plus free labor from the parish owners he managed to get things organized Bishop Prud homme in his report of his 1935 pastoral visit wrote

Thanks to generous benefactors from beyond the parish the pastor had been able to enhance the parish property by a fence a garden a chicken coop a barn a summer kitchen etc Moreover he has endowed the church with a splendid altar and pulpit (the handiwork of Mr Luc Sasseville of Spiritwood) and a number of religious articles

It seems Fr Burrell paid for out of his own pocket other things besides religious articles An inventory the bishop asked him to make includes many household items and furnishings he donated to the parish

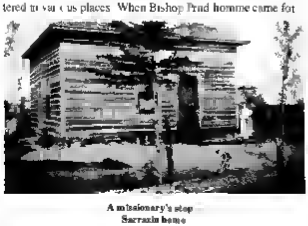
The poverty was accompanied by other problems The numerous missions the distance he had to travel over poor roads the strain of not always being understood sometimes even the controversy all these made the years difficult ones and Fr Burrell expressed his uneasiness about it all Eventually illness became the dominant factor and he was forced to abandon his ministry by the fall of 1940 But just before he left the parish he was trying to get the parishioners to build a parish hall He had solicited lumber and cement but the project seems to have been dropped after he left Already a very sick man he returned to his native Maritimes and died there of cancer in 1941

SATELLITE COMMUNITIES

As the Spiritwood area developed surrounding districts also grew Our parish history cannot be told without stressing the importance of these neighboring areas and their people

By 1935 Spiritwood was the center from which Fr Burrell (who had replaced Fr Beaulac as pastor in 1934) ministered to various places When Bishop Prud homme came for confirmations in 1935 he tells of his visit to the different missions of Sacred Heart Parish At each he said Mass and confirmed the children The first was St Stephen s in the Newbury district another at the Szuc home southwest of Spiritwood Bapanne (home of Ben Chenier) Mildred Shell Lake (McCann s Garage) at the Gaboriau s south of Mildred At the time of the 1935 visit the Bishop s report lists St Stephen s and Mildred as having the crown church plans were being made to build chapels at Shell Lake and Bapanne Eventually Mildred would become an independent parish before it would be reunited to Spiritwood

All of the areas with the exception of Shell Lake would eventually be absorbed by Sacred Heart Parish Even the mother parish of Laventure would be dissolved and be partitioned between Spiritwood and Leoville But the fact remains that the history of each area is very much a part of our history



A missionary's stop
Sarrazin home

ST. STEPHEN'S COLONY

It was mentioned above that a large number of Hungarian families settled south of Spiritwood Undoubtedly ministering to these people was inadequate because of the difference in culture and language It was not surprising that they should request a priest to minister to them in their own language A letter dated February 1929 was written to Bishop Prud homme by A C Snyder a notary public on behalf of the Hungarian population (two hundred and thirty families five hundred people) for a resident priest of their language

Hungarian clergy in western Canada were not easy to come by so Father Tombu visited the area to say mass and to minister as best he could Even after he left Laventure to go to Fairholme he still returned occasionally to the district saying mass in the homes for example at the Martin Orosz farm Now and then a Hungarian priest from Stockholm (near Regina) Fr Santha Pal would come to minister to these parishioners

In 1934 Fr Burrell came to Spiritwood he had studied two years in Budapest and could speak and write Hungarian by then St Stephen's had its church

The church was a log structure twenty by thirty feet built on Section 22 Township 48 Range 11 West of 3rd It was erected by the parishioners sometime between 1930 and 1932 In 1934 Father Burrell would request permission from the bishop to build a new and larger church but the project never seems to have taken place

The frequency of services remains a question mark but it would appear that they were fairly regular during the summer months and occasionally during the winter

After Fr Burrell left Spiritwood the succeeding pastors Frs Ferron and Roy continued the summer ministry at St Stephen s Catechism classes were organized for the young people during the summer taught (at least on a few occasions) by the Sisters of Service from Stockholm Sask As well in 1942 a Father Vezes of Regina gave a retreat in Hungarian at the church Again in 1954 a retreat had been

planned for October this time Fr Bystio was to preach A change of pastors may have led to the plans being dropped The Bishop confirmed at St Stephen s in 1935 in 1940 and perhaps in other years

The church remained in use until 1951 after which it seems to have fallen into disuse Eventually the chairs from the church were used for the Separate School some of the statues were given to the Shell Lake chapel And now the building is disintegrating a reminder that times change

As for the people they too have changed grown The thirties were hard times and many of the Hungarian families moved away both east and west But many stayed and are now of our community

St Stephen s Church and parishioners

BAPAUME

When horse and buggy was the quick way to travel when roads were trails and just about impassable seven miles was a long distance We know that Fr Tombu tried to reach all Catholic neighborhoods by going into a home-gathering families together saying mass and ministering to them Bapaume was one of these neighborhoods

During the 1930 s there was a feeling that it would be preferable to have a chapel in Bapaume When Bishop Prud homme came in 1935 he went to Bapaume visited and held a confirmation for eleven young people at the home of Ben Chenier After lunch a meeting was held with the parishioners

The Bishop states that the topic of discussion was the building of a small church lumber was already available The bishop agreed and a board of trustees was elected J B Chartrand Joseph Levassenr and Ovilla Chenier It was to determine a site and draw up more specific plans

However as we read through the records we find nothing more about the project We can only surmise that the people made the decision to travel to Spiritwood for church services

GABORIAU'S - Sonth of Mildred

The same visit of the Bishop in 1935 records that he also went to the Gaboriau home about nine or ten miles south of Mildred There three young people were confirmed after a Mass Apparently this was another of the areas that Fr Burrell visited and gathered the neighbors for Mass in the mid-thirties

Of that visit in 1935 the Bishop writes At 1 p m (after confirmation mass and sermon) we went with Fr Labbe in a democrat through stumps stones holes to confirm Mr Schneider and his wife It took forty five minutes to go a mile and a quarter It says something of the road conditions

The Gaboriau Mission was not about to fade away They continued having mass now and then by Fr Burrell On January 7 1937 at the home of Hilaire Gaboriau a meeting was held that came to a decision to build a log church It would be twenty two by thirty two feet on two acres of land at the northwest corner of the NW quarter Section 8 Township 49 Range 9 West of 3rd land to be donated by Hilaire Gaboriau

A few more meetings were apparently held on the plans but this project also was shelved and eventually given up The area became a part of the Mildred parish

MILDRED

The history of the Church in Mildred goes back about 60 years. Sometime before 1920 the exact date is unknown Fr Simonin from Muskeg Lake visited settlers in the area Some still recall the Masses in the Cederholme just south of present day Mildred. He usually travelled with his own team of horses (distinctively called "Fifi" and "Faff") accompanied by his dog "Saramous". The typical missionary with the long white beard every one who met him and remembers him has kind things to say about him

St. Albert the Great Church Mildred

Later when Fr Trombu was pastor of Laventure he began visiting the area on a regular basis. His schedule often included Rat Lake — the name that seems to have designated the region until the later 1920's. Mistofohen the centre where he said mass is indicated as the "Turgeon home".

In 1929 Fr Beaulac came to reside at Spiritwood and by 1931 (perhaps earlier) records indicate he was going to Mildred. Some remember that for a time at least masses were held at the hall. Also in the early 30's priests would come by train no doubt from Prince Albert to minister to parishioners. The name of Fr Daigle often comes up quite often in the register from 1932 until 1934. Fr Duprat often later to become bishop would also come now and then.

Fr Burrell began serving Mildred upon his arrival in Spiritwood in 1934. It is about this time that the building of a church was started. It was built on land belonging to J Sinkiewicz a merchant (now Levis land). The first time it was used as a place of worship was according to a recollection I'm a first communion celebration. It still had no shingles no windows because unfinished we are told the building was not used for mass the first winter after its construction.

On August 8 1935 was Bishop Prud'homme's pastoral visit to Mildred. In his report the bishop writes "During the evening (August 7 from Spiritwood) departure for Mildred J Sinkiewicz merchant of Mildred came for us with his truck. We stayed at his home. Next day Tuesday August 8 1935 low mass by the pastor. We heard confessions mostly in German during mass. General communion. This communion gave joy to the heart of bishop. We found here a chapel large enough though modest but suitable. There is even a sacristy large enough to accommodate as a temporary residence the passing missionary.

Later in the day the Bishop sang the High Mass with sermon in French English and German. Confirmations full treed thirty four candidates received the sacrament the number says something about the Catholic population of the day. The collection at mass brought the handsome sum of two dollars and thirty five cents.

Further in his report the bishop writes "A parish banquet prepared by the ladies gathered around us the whole Catholic population and many non Catholics as well. The bishop gave a conference on T. Neumann and commented on the real spirit of a co-operation he found in the community. He promised that he would think seriously of sending them a resident pastor in a couple of years.

Mention was also made of purchasing lots from the C.N.R. on which the church was to be moved. Apparently the lots were subsequently bought for in an announcement on Sunday September 22 1935 Fr Burrell states that the excavation for the church will be started on "our lots". That same year the parish received five hundred dollars from the Catholic Church Extension to help complete their church.

In December 1935 Christmas Midnight Mass the first in Mildred's history is announced. Father Burrell requests that the parishioners make it beautiful a violin was to accompany the organ for the hymns. Along with this announcement another calls to place the church straight on its blocks "to dig more of the cellar — as well as the hauling of logs for a house for the priest twenty-six by thirty feet".

Obviously the church building was moved and over the years improved and finished. However a rectory was not built. The years became worse instead of better and the poverty of the times explains why in 1937 a trustees meeting deplores the hardship to pay the pastor and to make essential repairs.

FR. GEORGES LEMAIRE

Pastor of Mildred

On March 17 1939 Fr Georges Lemaire arrived as the first resident pastor. Fr Lemaire came to Canada as a member of a religious order the Fathers of the Sacred Heart. With a few others of the order they hoped to establish the order in Canada. But after some years the order asked the priests to either return to France or join the diocesan clergy. Most chose the latter option. Fr Lemaire became a Canadian citizen and later became parish pastor of Mildred.

Fr. Georges Lemaire and a teacher of Mirror Lake

Immediately upon his arrival he was put to work. The very next day a parishioner, Mr. Morton, died. And one day after that the new pastor baptized Lilian Eva, daughter of Frank Sr. – and Katherine Schaan.

The task of finding a suitable residence was then faced. The parish purchased a house from Walter Wenninger, and moved it onto the lots adjacent to the Church. Cash for the purchase was borrowed from Mr. Woodcock, a merchant and parishioner. The other parish members repaid him by hauling cordwood.

Fr. Lemaire would stay as pastor until serious illness forced his departure in 1953. It was extremely difficult for him to leave his beloved people, but cancer was already rendering him incapable of ministering to them. After a brief period of retirement at Zenon Park, he died and was buried there in 1955.

He was a true shepherd to his people, he is remembered almost universally with excellent memories by all who knew him. But his record keeping, alas, lutes were not the greatest, so very little remains in written testimony of his years as pastor. For historical purposes, it does leave a vacuum that can only be filled by a few memories of people who lived that period.

We are told he was not much of a housekeeper either! The ladies would organize a "bee" to clean the rectory at least twice a year. Father apparently would let them be, but felt that he couldn't find anything after they left. He loved to mingle with people and was friendly to all; nothing soph sticated about him. Sometimes he would even go out and help the farmers, for example, to stook during harvest. He also loved to work outside, and did much to beautify the church and rectory grounds.

One instant is told about him. He had been at a card party at the Mirror Lake School. While there, a snowstorm had blown up, and on his way back, his car got stuck in a bank. Next morning, a parishioner saw the cat, almost completely covered in a snow drift. Almost fearful, he dug to see if Father was still there, perhaps frozen. But no! The neighbors hadn't seen him! So off to Mildred they went – not knowing that he had walked that mile or more in the blizzard and cold.

DOMINICANS TAKE OVER SPIRITWOOD PARISH

In 1938, Bishop Prud'homme was replaced by a Bishop R. Duprat, a Dominican. With the shortage of diocesan priests, Bishop Duprat was able to get help from his community. So when Fr. Burrell became ill, he was temporarily replaced by a Dominican priest, Fr. H. M. Dussault, a period which lasted several months from Oct. 1940 to March 1941.

Fr. Dussault had no doubt been made aware of the financial plight of the parish, and was determined to set things right. He tried to set up a system of lay responsibility, and a fixed compensation for the pastor. But somehow, he was unable to grasp the pulse of the parish, and it didn't work out in the way he would have liked.

By spring of 1941, he was replaced briefly by a Fr. L. Bussiere, an Oblate. During the summer months, the parish was vacant. Fr. Dumas, pastor of Laventure, came to say mass on Sundays and take care of other ministry.

Fr. N. Ferron with communion class

In December 1941, after Fr. Burrell had passed away, Father Norbert Ferron, another dominican, became Spiritwood's third pastor. Very few indications are left to describe this 1940's in our parish history. It was firstly a time when the area was gradually coming out of the depression

and drought of the 30's. Secondly, it was a time of World War, when despite appearances that nothing was seriously affected, there was not too much growth or prosperity.

A few parishioners went off to war, others were affected by rationing cards or books. Drives were made for War Bonds, people were asked to contribute to the Red Cross, etc. And along with the prayers to obtain peace, church life went on.

The spirituality seems to have followed much the same pattern as that of the 30's, devotions, mass, prayers were of the same style. Fewer remarks were made about dances, morals, loose conduct. Little change was made in the style of church life.

Revenue was still hard to come by. Spiritwood remained a rather poor area. Card parties brought more than before, e.g., once forty-three dollars, another one hundred and three dollars. Summer picnics, fall bazaars, were still the order of the day. Volunteer labor was called upon to keep up the premises, just as it had been in 1938, to paint the church in 1942, to clean the yard and plant the trees (some of which still stand to the south of our present building). And there is still the problem of getting firewood.

It seems, from the feeling given by reading the records, that a greater confidence was developed towards church and pastor. Religious education became more and more a vital issue. Sisters came to teach catechism, both in Spiritwood and at St. Stephen's, during summer vacations. Teaching of religion in the school was considered to be a possibility, and it is Father Ferron who made the first contacts which would lead to the Sisters of Presentation coming to this parish.

Times were still difficult. Fr. Ferron mentions in his announcement book that he had "no horses, nor car," and must depend on his parishioners to take him to the mission of St. Stephen's (attended to regularly during summer months, but apparently closed during the winter). But as far as Mildred is concerned, a resident pastor was there since 1938, and is no longer the responsibility of the local pastor here. Parish visits also were made, despite the lack of a vehicle.

No major projects seem to have been mentioned or completed during these years—except a mention of repairs to the cellar and foundations of the rectory in 1943.

THE ONGOING STORY OF LAVENTURE: FR. PARADIS

In the 1920's, as we have described, Laventure was the centre from which a large area received the ministry of the church. Within that area, numerous parishes or missions would be born: Spiritwood, St. Stephen's, Mildred, Medstead, Fairholme (now Glaslyn), Rabbit Lake, Shell Lake, Leoville.

While Father Beaulac was getting established in Spiritwood, another young priest was sent to help Fr. Tombu at Laventure. He came in the fall of 1929, and his name was Fr. Alex Grimard. It was a growing area. Bishop Prud'homme

First church, Laventure.

writes in the Laventure register upon his 1928 visit: "This part of the diocese has marvelously developed in the last four years. The railroad will soon cross the district. The land in cultivation has considerably increased: about 6 000 acres have been broken to date in 1928 alone." (August 21). Fr. Grimard ministered to Catholics north of Laventure, and was to become the founder of St. Theresa parish of Leoville. The registers begin in February 1930, we can assume that the parish was officially set up by then, or shortly after.

In the same year, 1930, Fr. Armand Tombu left for Fairholme, the man the bishop would praise for his apostolic zeal in ministering to this whole area. Later, when the diocese of Prince Albert was divided, Fr. Tombu found himself in the new Saskatoon diocese, where he would stay until his death at Biggar in 1966.

Laventure was now by itself, not too large in area, but still with many farm families, nearly one on every quarter section of land. A pioneer recalls that on a dark night, from his second floor window, you could count some twenty five lights coming from different homes; now, you would probably see only three or four from the same location. Another factor that made the parish viable was the larger size of the families then, thus a greater number of "souls" as parishioners were sometimes referred to in church language.

When Fr. Alexandre Paradis came as pastor in September, 1930, it was to a smooth running rural parish, without any missions. Fr. Paradis never drove a car, so his movements were restricted. By all appearances, church life with its weekly and daily masses, its devotions, its picnics, suppers and bazaars, much resembled that of Spiritwood. If we can judge from impressions gleaned from reading the announcement books and records, there was less controversy and greater ease in financing (though in the 30's there were real difficulties in this area as well). Perhaps the group was more monolithic and held more together.

Times were hard, no doubt. And if one goes to the graveyard, looks at the tombstones, one becomes aware of the high infant mortality of those first years. Upon checking the funeral register, we also notice the alarming number of young people dying long before their time. Questioning

A picnic in the 40's

oldtimers about this they will tell of incidents when disease or accident would overcome someone and when you could afford a doctor or decided to go for him the distance and road conditions often made his arrival too late

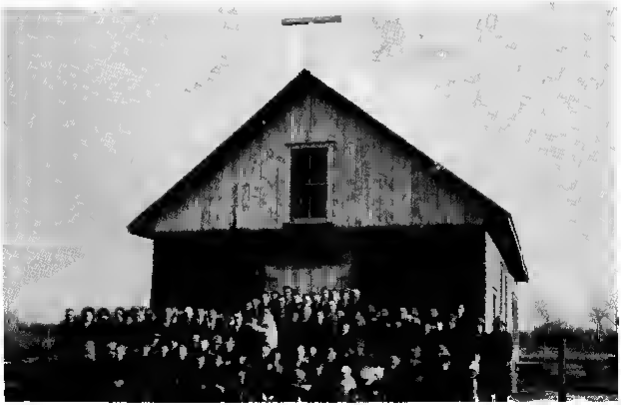
Religious instruction to the children was given at the schools in the predominantly Catholic districts In church history we cannot forget those valiant teachers who went out to the pioneer districts literally in the wilderness and be sides teaching the three R s also passed on the rud iments of Faith One such teacher s name will be familiar to Spirit wood readers she came from Albertville to the North Creek School in the early 1930 s and passed on her convictions Her name Marianna Dussault later to become Sister Marianna who returned many years later to teach at the Spiritwood Separate School If we pick her name it is only to recall all the teachers of the one-room country schools in our area who helped the Fa th to grow in the hearts of their students

FR. DUMAS

New Pastor of Laventure

In 1941 a Dominican priest Fr Andre Dumas replaced Fr Parad's as pastor Parish life continued much as before But during these years a new church would be built across the road from the first structure

The first building dated back to 1924 it was a simple log structure with only a cross mounted on its peak reaching out towards the heavens In 1927 the building was lengthened and a steeple constructed The rectory was really the back



A cross towards the heavens— Laventure

part of the same building, and provided cramped quarters for the resident pastor. Further back from the building, a fence enclosed a graveyard that still is the burial spot for residents of the area.

Church picnic Laventure

By the time Fr. Dumas arrived, the edifice was in a poor state. And immediately upon his arrival, we are told, he began to hold bazaars, picnics and other functions to raise money for a new building.

When construction really started is vague, in the resident's memories. But one thing is obvious. Fr. Dumas would not build something to topple over. The full basement was a truly solid foundation to hold a solid, bolted structure. The actual construction spanned a number of years. Some think it was started in 1943, with the excavation and the beginning of the foundations. As funds and free labor were available, construction continued.

Records show that in 1945, Father was thanking parishioners for hauling gravel, stone and lumber. Also volunteers were being asked to work at the construction site. And by expenses recorded, it would seem that construction went on in 1946, 1947 and 1948. Then on June 19th, 1949, the blessing of the church is announced for July 10th.

The new church, Laventure

In the same period of time, foundations were laid for a rectory, alongside the new church. However, nothing ever came of these cement markers, unfinished, they would mark the fact that the parish was growing weaker.

1952 came. Fr. Dumas was not well. Also, under Bishop Blais, the Dominicans were withdrawing from the parishes. In August, the church builder left. Later, on December 10, he was replaced by Father Martin Van den Akker. By the following summer, Fr. Van would move to Mildred, and in 1954, to Spiritwood, serving Laventure as a mission for the first time since 1924. It was without a resident priest, the auxiliary parishes had outgrown the mother parish!

It was on June 18, 1954, that a special celebration took place in the Laventure parish. For the first time, a native son, Herve Vallee, was ordained to the priesthood. The occasion was a memorable one; not only because it was a first, but because of the road situation. It had rained heavily on previous days; roads, even the highway, were just about impassable. Bishop Blais was to arrive the previous evening, however, his car became bogged down near Mildred. From there on, it was pulled and dragged, until finally he reached Laventure at 3 a.m. Others, not so vitally necessary to the ordination, never made it. But the celebration went on. Fr. Vallee now teaches in Prince Albert.

Fr. Timmermans came to Spiritwood in 1954, and would serve Laventure for the next two years. The next resident pastor would arrive in August, 1956: Father J. A. Campagna.

FATHER GILLES ROY, o.p.

Fourth Pastor of Spiritwood

Fr. Roy arrived to take charge of Sacred Heart Parish on September 4, 1949. He seems to have been a determined man, and set about the task that was before him.

Fr. Gilles Roy, o.p.

First of all, there was the matter of an outstanding debt to the diocese, from a loan made to the parish in the 1930's. Fr. Ferron had apparently made a five hundred dollar payment during his stay here, and now Fr. Roy asked the parish ones to help pay the final five hundred dollars. After the fall bazaar in November, the C.W.L. presented the parish with a cheque to close the debt.

As well, Father Roy was suggesting that the church be raised in the spring and a basement built underneath. But this project seems to have been abandoned - the cellar (a trench under the church) often had water in the spring, and with time would affect the whole building - but that would be a project for the 1970's.

Fr. G. Roy and parishioners

The most impressive undertaking of the parish in these early 50's was beyond doubt the formation of a Separate School. Fr. Ferron had initiated the idea, and now that the process had been set in motion, Fr. Roy would pursue the goal with ardor.

In May 1950, he preached a strong sermon advocating the necessity of a Separate School, because of the difficulties experienced in obtaining French and religious instruction at the Public School. The other steps will be mentioned later.

Fr. Roy continued serving St. Stephen's until the summer of 1952—saying Sunday Mass there during summer months. Religious instruction by Sisters was organized for one week in July for the children at St. Stephen's.

During Fr. Roy's stay in Spiritwood, the card parties, bazaars and picnics took on the added responsibility of church and school. The years witnessed the campaign to establish a French Radio station in Northern Saskatchewan, the debenture issue for the school, the welcome of the new Bishop, Leo Blais, the Blessing of the new Separate School, the ordination of Fr. Vallee at Laventure.

The arrival of the Sisters of the Presentation in August 1950 was to mark a new period in Catholic education (this is elaborated upon in another chapter of our history), but we know that the influence of the Sisters went far beyond the school. The blessing of their convent on January 6, 1954, was a blessing as well to the parish. Their permanent residence here was to mark a new chapter in church life—a chapter we will write separately.

The early 1950's also saw new pews (contracted out to Chilton's Co. of Spiritwood) being made for the church.

The C.W.L. were active, and the Knights of Columbus began in Spiritwood. We will write more on their work in another chapter.

Spiritually, the ministry of God's love continued. Retreats were organized, for example, by Fr. Dubois in 1950, Fr. Laframboise in 1954, and Fr. Byrne for Hungarians in 1954.

On January 24, 1954, Fr. Gilles Roy announced his departure the next day; the new pastor still unnamed. It wasn't too many years, in 1966, that the parish learned he had passed away.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION TO THE YOUNG PEOPLE

It was stated earlier that religious instruction of the young is an important part of church life. In our parish, this part was to take on a new direction as our position in the community changed. In the early years, the majority of the population of the immediate Spiritwood area was Catholic and for the most part, of French descent. In 1930, for example, in a letter to the bishop, it is stated that there were only about 35 families of Protestant background (non-Catholic), compared to seventy-five Catholic families.

These facts explain why the liturgy (mass), the announcements and sermons were mostly in French. It also explains why religious instruction, whether on Sundays or at the school, was given mostly in French. Also, the pastor in the 1930's seems to have had ready access to the school after hours—for catechism lessons.

As the population grew, as the district was enlarged, and especially as the larger Unit was introduced into the school system, Catholics became a minority, all be it an important one. For this reason, religious instruction to youngsters was rendered more difficult. As well, the survival of the French language was put to the test. Solutions were sought to what were considered parallel problems.

In 1948, Fr. Ferron initiated correspondence with Sister Marie Ste. Lutgarde, provincial superior of the Sisters of the Presentation. Some of the Sisters had been to Spiritwood to teach summer sessions of catechism and had been favorably impressed by the Catholic population. In turn, the Catholics were impressed with the Sisters. Fr. Ferron's approach was to ask whether the Sisters would consider coming to Spiritwood and take up positions on the school staff, beginning in 1949. The local board was of a Catholic make up and was favorable to the idea. The aim would be to have better French instruction, as well as the possibility of religious instruction in the school, even if after hours.

The Sisters agreed to come if at least two were hired on the teaching staff. The next step was to approach the Shell Lake School Unit Board, and request that the two Sisters be engaged as teachers at the Public School. Mr. Limoges, Unit trustee for Spiritwood, presented this as a motion by at a board meeting (March 1949). However, this was opposed by another trustee. Apparently, a growing opposition was being felt at the local level. The matter was discussed, and the board decided that the controversial issue should be left until further representations could be made.

A brief was presented on behalf of the Catholic ratepayers. It stressed the desirability of hiring the Sisters on a linguistic (French) basis. A new school was being built; equal opportunity to learn a second language should be given – this was the argument used. Also, the brief argued, the school would be socially and morally benefitted by the presence of the Sisters.

The arguments – though legitimate as they might have seemed to French Catholics – were rejected, probably because of the outspoken opposition amongst other ratepayers. The religious aspect, it would seem, could have been advocated as a minority right, but this issue seems to have been swept under the carpet.

In early 1950, a school board election took place; the lines were drawn. The Catholic candidate lost out. The hope of having Sisters in the new school to meet the legitimate aspirations and needs of the large number of Catholics (fifty-four per cent of students) and those of French extraction (fifty two per cent) seemed to have been denied.

SEPARATE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Catholic ratepayers, having been refused what they felt were their legitimate demands of a new public school their taxes had helped build, now seemed to have only one alternative: begin the process of establishing a Separate School District, allowed by law, to protect minorities in circumstances such as these.

It was spring, 1950. With J. G. Crepeau and then J. M. Cuelenaere as their lawyers, the Catholics, led by Fr. Roy (who had replaced Fr. Ferron in 1949), began the process. Application to establish a Separate School was made to the Minister of Education. Because the number of Catholic and non-Catholic ratepayers was so close, the Department of Education decided it must conduct a complete survey to verify if the Catholics in the said district were truly a minority. The committee pushing the issue in Spiritwood were impatient; they wanted their school by September. The survey by mail took time; all the answers had to be in. The result, coming only in late June, was that there were twelve fewer Catholic ratepayers than non-Catholic – a slim minority.

The final step, a legal vote on the issue by the Catholic ratepayers, held at a general meeting called for July 31st, 1950. After confirming the affirmative vote, the minister declared the existence of Spiritwood R. C. Separate School District No. 26, and authorized the newly elected board, Isidore Doucet, Fernand Rabut, and Arthur Lavoie to operate a Separate School. But there was a catch: it was too late to reorganize the tax base for 1950. Hence, the new board would be without tax resources until 1951.

Still, the Board and pastor were determined to go ahead and open the school immediately in September, 1950. Three weeks after they were elected, the Sisters of the Presentation would arrive. Plans had to be made quickly for locales, supplies, etc.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE SISTERS IN SPIRITWOOD

On August 24, 1950, four Sisters of the Presentation of Mary arrived in Spiritwood to become the teachers at the yet unbuilt Spiritwood Separate School No. 26. Sister Louise Aimee (Alphonsine Arsenault), Grades nine to twelve; Sister Ste. Marie de Galilee (Simone Perrel), Grades five to eight; Sister Jeanne de l'Eucharistie (Huguette Honle), Grades one to four; Sister Francis (Cecile Plourde), cook – general helper.

Their arrival on the bus in rain and mud was as humble an event as myriads that go unrecorded. Why then should it now be set down as a part of Spiritwood's history? I believe that in more ways than one it was symbolic of the growing pains of our province and of our reach toward a Canadian culture of which future generations will have reasons to be proud.

Sr. Louise-Aimee

The little village of Spiritwood was bitterly divided on language and religious issues. For three years before our arrival the predominantly French speaking Catholic population had struggled to obtain fuller recognition of its demands for French and Religion as subjects at school. In 1950 they were granted the right to set up

Sr Simone Perrel

then Separate School. Of this part of the struggle we were only vaguely aware but as community we were told that Spiritwood had asked for Sisters. We also had various echoes of the conflicts and prayed that we would not have to accept. Our prayers were answered as only God can answer them: not only could they set up a Separate Elementary School but a High School as well! God too has blessed the enterprise: the friendly co-operative growing town is a proof that courage and determination lead to mutual respect and understanding that unity in diversity is possible and effective.

Sr Huguette Houle

Sr Cecile Plourde

However—that is now—not 1950. Let us go back to the bus stopped in the dark very near Mr. Gerard Charlebois' butcher shop. There was no one on the street and not one of us had been in Spiritwood recently. A rather timid knock on Mr. Charlebois' locked door brought immediate response. At his joyous telephone calls cars arrived and drove us to the rectory — the utterly poor former garage which Father Gilles Roy of p— had chosen as temporary home. There we found him at a meeting with two of our first trustees—Mr. Louis Lavoie and Mr. Louis Marin. With Father they welcomed us warmly and showed us to what was to become our dwelling place until April 8, 1953 — the former rectory just behind and linked to the church.

It did not look much like a home. Beds and boxes were piled pell mell both in the kitchen and front room. However as more willing helpers arrived, beds were set up upstairs and some order established in what had at first appeared as impossible chaos.

The next day, Friday, we attended our first Mass and had our first view of the inside of the church. A partition had been put up to divide two-thirds of the nave lengthwise. Behind this thin partition was to be the classroom of Grades five, six, seven and eight. The younger pupils were to be in the open space. A blue curtain which could be opened for Sunday Mass and drawn for school days later added a small touch of coziness to Grades one, two, three and four. Grades nine, ten, eleven and twelve were to be housed in the rectory in what was also our dining and sitting room. Sneh was to be the school until November 19, 1951.

At that first Mass an interesting incident occurred. No altar boy appeared and Sister Jeanne gave the required Latin responses from her pew. One little girl, evidently at church to see us, was horrified. When we talked to her after she could say nothing but: Isn't it awful! Some one talked out loud at church.

At nine o'clock several men arrived assuring us every thing would be ready for school on Monday. They completed the partition and built plywood tables that could seat three. Church chairs would serve as school chairs. There was such a spirit of confidence, hope and good humour among the workers that our hearts rose in spite of the difficulties we knew. There was a railway strike on. Our school supplies had been ordered and shipped but were now locked in immovable cars. As we raced to place our things, meet the parents and register the pupils who came throughout the day, one question always nagged at our consciousness, unable to surface for lack of time: What shall I teach? What shall I do? Another was never far behind: How will the pupils react to us and to our set up when on the day they first come to our Separate School, a new Public School is opening just across the street from us?

On Sunday after Mass work continued and by Sunday evening we had desks, chairs, blackboards in place. I was to continue on a voluntary basis—until the Separate School was built: the convent completed the rectory restored.

Monday, August 28, 1950 dawned bright and clear. We were cheered by the open faces and evident good will of the great majority of our pupils who numbered seventy seven. In fact, only three pupils, all of the same family, left us during that first year. The good will so evident at our arrival and on that first day of school never diminished but blossomed into many lasting friendships. It gave to the first Sisters in Spiritwood more joy than discomforts, more consolations than work: an experience never to be forgotten and a host of pleasant memories.

GOD BLESS SPIRITWOOD!

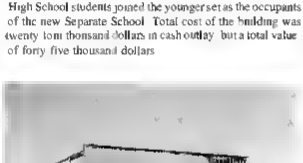
Sr Louise Aimee

CONSTRUCTION OF THE SEPARATE SCHOOL

During the winter of 1950-51 volunteers were recruited to cut logs for the lumber of the future building. With the leadership of Arthur Lavoie, Louis Mann and Florence Turgeon along with the help of many other volunteers, the logs were cut. Towards spring they were sawed. Later, when roads dried, the lumber was hauled to Spiritwood.

Lumber began to arrive at the construction site on May 27, 1951. The next day a bulldozer began the excavation. It was the beginning of the building that was to take shape. J. B. Godbout was to be the contractor, but upon his withdrawal, another Marcelin man, Rosaire Tremblay was hired. A debenture issue was floated to obtain funds for the construction along with grants and voluntary labor, the building took shape.

By November 17, the two elementary classes (one to four and five to eight) were able to occupy the new premises, though still not quite complete. It was on December 7 that the High School students joined the younger set as the occupants of the new Separate School. Total cost of the building was twenty tom thousand dollars in cash outlay, but a total value of forty five thousand dollars.



Spiritwood Separate School during construction

Spiritwood Separate School completed

OFFICIAL OPENING, JUNE 29, 1952

Just before he was to leave the diocese, Bishop R. Duprat came to Spiritwood on June 29, 1952 to preside at the official opening of the new school. In the morning some forty four candidates from the school received the sacrament of confirmation. Then in the afternoon, the opening ceremonies took place at the school itself.

Official opening, Spiritwood Separate School

Besides the Bishop, other speakers were C. Armandrad, the superintendent who spoke on behalf of the Department of Education, R. H. Woof, M.L.A. for Turtleford constituency, Fr. G. Roy, pastor. Before the speeches, the school choir sang a French song and after the blessing they sang "Bless This House". Then the guests entered, signed a register, visited the classrooms and had tea. Some one hundred and fifty guests signed the register.

The Separate School had its problems, the first years were filled with financial difficulties. Only because the Sisters worked for practically no salary was it possible to continue. There was a shortage of supplies, poor materials, but a lot of spirit that kept things alive until conditions improved.

There were moments of glory as well. Despite the adverse conditions, the students of the first year passed their exams. In 1953, Simone Brunet of the graduating class, honored her school by winning the Governor General's medal for the highest average in this area of the province. At the same time she was the A.C.F.C. laureate for highest honors in the French exams in the whole province.

GROWTH OF THE SEPARATE SCHOOL

Another sign of the acceptance and growth of the school was its increasing enrollment from seventy seven in 1950 to two hundred and forty three in 1965. The increase can be accounted for by the gradual closure of country schools and bussing students to Spiritwood. Thus the students from Regent, North Creek and Witchekan schools were accepted for the 1958-59 term. Before that in 1957, the Sisters wrote in

their chronicles that students from Laventure Mildred Bapaume and Ranger were already enrolled at the Separate School.

The increasing enrollment put stress on the facilities and staff more space and more teachers were required. With better funding, lay teachers were hired. In July 1959 a decision was reached by the school board to purchase the two-room public school building constructed in 1936 for the cost of six hundred dollars. It would be purchased and remodelled by Laventure residents in return for the continued acceptance of their students. Firstly it had to be moved the Public School Board wanted it off their property. Raising the building proved to be a problem - the rot caused the floor to give way. And when it was finally to be set on the new foundations it was dropped and cracked almost in two.

Notre Dame Hall

But finally in place, behind the church it was renovated. Folding doors separated the two classrooms. It became the "new High School and eventually would be known as Notre Dame Hall. It was put into use in 1960 and would serve until 1968 as a school, then as a hall until sold to the "Pioneer Centre" in 1974.

Also in September 1960 plans were made by the Board to acquire two country schools for further classroom space. As government policy gave first chance to local residents groups to buy these buildings, the Board enlisted the services of the Laventure 4-H club to buy the North Creek school for them.

Similarly, a group helped acquire the Witchekan school under the name of the "Witchekan Home and School". Costs were five hundred and ten dollars and four hundred dollars respectively. The two buildings were moved into town on lots just north of the convent, and were ready for occupancy by the end of October 1960.

Another giant step was made in 1962. A new debenture issue was floated for twenty two thousand dollars. Along with eight thousand six hundred dollars in grants, this allowed them to begin a four room addition to the original structure. Upon completion the school occupied the full twelve classrooms.

In the fall of 1965 one of the "cottage" schools was closed, and the grades nine and ten were combined in one classroom. In 1966 the other "cottage" school was also closed, a room at the convent was used as a classroom. The lots north of the convent were put up for sale by a Board decision of October 1966 (the buildings were not too suitable as classrooms, and had probably already been sold).

Cottage Schools.

THE SISTERS OF THE PRESENTATION

The Sisters of the Presentation of Mary are the spiritual daughters of Anne Marie Rivier, their foundress. Through her incessant efforts towards the christian education of young people, she founded in 1796, in France, the order which was to spread to many parts of the world, including ours. Only last year, 1978, the Sisters celebrated the seventy fifth anniversary of their arrival in Western Canada.

In the latter 1940's Fr. Ferron approached the then Provincial Superior, Sr. Ste-Lutgarde, to send some of her Sisters to Spiritwood. The obvious reason was to teach at the school - especially the teaching of religion and French. But though we cannot read into the minds of the people then, we can only guess that they were expecting much more from the community of Sisters.

So it was with anticipation that parishioners welcomed officially, though the pastor, on Sunday, August 27, 1950 the first four Sisters to become part of our christian community. Those first expectations were more than met. It wasn't long before the sacristy, the altar vestments, the lingerie took on a touch of cleanliness. This was only one way in which the cult, the liturgy was enhanced by their presence. The care they have taken of the sanctuary at church, the decorations spoke that caring hands had been put to work.

Then, what about the music, the choir, the singing at Mass? Over the years, the Sisters have shared their talents and dedication with us. And though, in the first years they were looked upon with suspicion, they soon established themselves as respected citizens of the larger community. Almost always through these years, a music teacher responded to the needs of many beyond our parish. They have

become involved directly and through the Separate School in many different parish school and community activities. As a group they are now looked upon as an asset to the Spiritwood community.

Typical of the added touch they brought to the parish are the references Fr. Roy made of their contribution towards the celebration of Christmas 1950. He spoke specifically of the music choir, crib and thanked the Sisters "Christmas with a difference! And since then it would be a parish with a difference."

And the people responded with acceptance, trying to help make the Sisters feel at home. In the fall of the first years a shower was held to bring garden and farm produce to help the little community and later their boarders. Other parishioners offered other services.

The renewal of the Church following Vatican II has also touched the Sisters of Presentation. Perhaps most noticeable were changes in their habit or dress. But just as important were changes in their lifestyle which made for greater ease in their relations with the general public. Driving their own car is one example that has given them greater mobility and ease of action. The renewal was deeper than these externals, the more profound changes must be experienced rather than written about.

The Sisters are now involved in many facets of parish life. Some are members of Parish Council Committees. Their visits to the sick, the elderly and to other families are appreciated. For years they have offered hot, home cooked meals to the pastor.

In 1970, during a period of illness of Fr. Doucette, a Sister was granted permission to give communion to her community--as well as bring it to the sick. Since then, they very often help distribute communion at Sunday Mass. Since 1971, a Sister has been teaching Christian Ethics (Religion) at the Public High School where both Catholics and non-Catholics enroll in her classes. 1975 was the twenty fifth anniversary of their arrival in Spiritwood, the festivities surrounding that occasion are described as part of the history of the Separate School.

BOARDING SCHOOL & CONVENT

The Sisters main apostolate was and is the christian education of the children at school. In the chapters on the Separate School, we have mentioned this work. But in their early years amongst us, there were students who, without busses and living at a distance, would not be able to benefit of this type of education unless they had a place to board near the school.

When the Sisters first arrived, they were housed in the former rectory (Fr. Roy had moved into the redecorated garage.) They were in cramped quarters, especially when we realize that the High School classroom was also in the rectory. Despite this, in January, 1952, they accepted their first boarder, Yvette Lafond. By August, for the new term,

Spiritwood Convent.

fifteen boarders were accepted; they ate their meals at the rectory-convent, and slept at the school.

It was back in 1951, the school board made a formal request to the Sisters of Presentation that they build a convent here. The desire probably was to see them more permanently established. Whatever negotiations had been started, and after some effort, Searle Grain finally agreed in March, 1952 to sell three lots to the convent. By May, plans were on the drawing board, and by June, excavation for the building was underway. Rosaire Tremblay from Marcelin was the contractor. During the summer, the building slowly became a reality.

Not until April 8, 1953, was the building sufficiently ready for the Sisters and their boarders, and even then, much of the building was still unfinished. It was on May 11, that the first Mass was said in the convent chapel. Before the end of the term, the number of boarders had swelled to twenty. Only for the beginning of the next term, in August, could the lower floor be occupied.

The next milestone came on the feast of the Epiphany, January 6, 1954. Surrounded by a number of guests, the Sisters witnessed the official opening and blessing of their convent by Bishop Leo Blais.

Over the years, the convent was embellished. In the summer of 1954, trees were planted, landscaping was done. Other renovations were done to the interior now and then, that kept it in excellent looking condition. Only recently, in 1978, the convent's exterior was refinished with attractive aluminum siding.

Boarders were accepted each year from 1953 to 1966. The number of Sisters jumped from the original four, to five, then eventually to eight, and is now at seven. It would be nice to make a complete list of all the Sisters who have worked in Spiritwood, but it would take much space. So we render tribute globally to each and everyone, and give thanks for their collective contribution to the life of the parish.

For the 1966-67 term, the school needed classroom space, so the convent opened its doors to one of the classes of students. It no longer received boarders. The need for this service was diminishing. Later, when the Separate School sent its Division 4 students to the new High School, the

Sisters found themselves with extra space. In 1973 they decided to offer the use of the large room downstairs for public use. Since then numerous activities such as Altar Boys Parties, Lenten sessions, Parish Council socials and other gatherings have been held there. The chapel at the convent has been used over the years for weekday parish masses.

And so the convent and the Sisters are part of our parish and their history is our history. The Christian community certainly would like to see it continue that way for a long time to come.

FR. MARTIN VAN den AKKER
Fifth Pastor

Father Van den Akker first came to minister in the area in 1952 the year in which he replaced Fr. Dumas as pastor of Laventure. Then in 1953 when Fr. Lemaire was forced by illness to retire from Mildred Fr. Van was asked to care for that parish as well. The residence was in better repair than the sacristy at Laventure so Fr. Van moved to Mildred. Finally in May 1954 he became the fifth pastor of Spirit wood.

After Father Roy's departure in January a priest of the Foreign Mission Society Fr. Yvon Guerin stationed at the time in Prince Albert assisted the ministerial services to Spirit wood for a few months until Fr. Van's appointment. However Fr. Van's stay was very short the summer clergy appointments saw Fr. Van go to Arborfield.

During his stay Fr. Van says he learned at least one important lesson you do not put ashes with hot coals into a cardboard box. He recalls how he almost set fire to the building by such a mistake but corrected it before the near fire began.

FR. WILHELMUS TIMMERMANS
Sixth Pastor

Fr. W. G. Timmermans

Fr. Tim as he is better known came to Spirit wood in August 1954 from Flame Lake. As Fr. Van before him he is a diocesan priest of Dutch origin. He speaks both French and English well and from his neutral position was able to introduce more English in church activities according to the changes in the population without being accused of partisanship.

In his early years of ministry he tells us Fr. Tim believed that parishioners should support their church and pastor through direct contributions. But he soon discovered that the needs surpassed revenue that projects of all kinds were required to keep the parish afloat as well as continue helping the Separate School in its growing years. So it was that Fr. Tim became adept at organizing card parties, bazaars, bingos, fowl suppers and second collections. Not to mention bottle drives!

The C.W.L. and K.C.'s became the driving force in sustaining parish projects. Regular card parties, during the winter, fowl suppers in autumn, K.C. bingos before Christmas and Easter parties for the school, a Christmas party for school children, the summer picnic at Mildred these were some of the fund raising and social activities that marked church life in our parish during the latter 1950's and early 1960's.

Fr. Tim also had a system: a second collection at Sunday Mass gradually accumulated funds for a specific item needed by the parish. Each project was aided by collecting and selling bottles. Knights of the Altar (altar boys) were a great help in this facet. And occasionally the proceeds from a C.W.L. or K.C. event were added to the fund.

In this way an organ was bought and the choir loft was renovated before Christmas 1957 (total cost one thousand seven hundred and sixty-nine dollars) paid for by July 1958.

Next came the electric chimes or bells purchased the following Christmas (cost six thousand seven hundred and seventy-eight dollars). In 1959 the fund went to purchasing casserole for the altar boys. Then for a new furnace (to heat Immaculate) paid by 1961 (cost two thousand three hundred and fifty-six dollars). Whether or not this fund raising tactic was continued after this is uncertain.

Let us not get the idea that Fr. Tim was only a fund raiser by no means! He helped to continue the growth of the Separate School. During his stay in Spiritwood the School progressed in many ways and he certainly helped this progress. He served as secretary treasurer for the Separate Board through out his years here.

Another important step was the purchase of a rectory in 1956. The residential quarters at the back of the church were not in the best of condition. On his own Fr. Tim purchased a house from Mr. Limoges located across the street from the church. After moving he had the wall of the sanctuary in the church opened using the space occupied by the residence at the back as the sanctuary and sacristy thus giving added and needed space in the church.

To his residence Fr. Tim soon added a T.V. one of the first in Spiritwood. It delighted the fans who came to watch wrestling and other chosen programs even though the picture was rather snowy.

1957 was the year of the big diocesan Eucharistic Congress in Prince Albert. All parishes of the diocese were expected to prepare Triduums (three days of prayer and retreat) were preached by Fr. R. Gaudet in Spiritwood and Fr. A. Marchildon in Mildred. Other devotions to the Eucharist a regular Mass and projects by the school children were all meant to sensitize Catholics to this manifestation of

Fa th When the event came parishioners were urged to attend a spec al bro was organized the Sunday bulletin gave the program And on July 7 at 7 p m the church bells rang out for five minutes as they d d throughout the diocese to mark the opening of the Congress fA note of interest during the Cn ngress a young man was ordained who would later become the tenth pastor of Spiritwood Fr Henri Renaud)

P A Eucharistic Congress

SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE FIFTIES

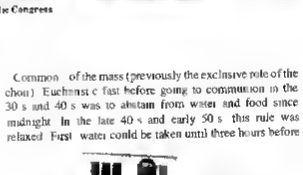
The 1950 s probably saw the culmination of a growing devotion to Mary in the Church The rosary the months of October and May devot ons the feasts and frequent liturgical prayers to the Virgin were a part of the spiritual fabric of every parish and Spiritwood was no exception

The First Friday devotions to the Sacred Heart were also special because of the parish s dedication to this symbol of Chr st s love

And of course Bishop Blais strong devot on to the Eucharistic Presence enhanced the already popular exercises of Benediction Holy Hours regional and diocesan congresses

The Separate School brought a community within a community school masses confessions student re treats and the religious part of the Graduation Exerc ses

Sundays the mass was still in Latin the priest facing the altar against the wall his back to the people But more and more people were encouraged to participate to answer the prayers (hitherto reserved to the altar boys) and to sing the Common of the mass (previously the exclusive role of the choir) Eucharist c fast before going to communion in the 30 s and 40 s was to abstain from water and food since midnight In the late 40 s and early 50 s this rule was relaxed First water could be taken until three hours before



A communion class in the 50's

communion then solids were allowed and water could be taken anytime The eventual ruling was and still is foods may be taken until one hour before communion

These were the first of a series of changes in Church discipline Friday abstinence was dropped Lenten fast was considerably modified days of penance (Vigils and Ember Days) were removed To people brought up in a consistency and inflexibility of centuries old church discipline these changes were almost traumatic what was happening? Was the Church changing its whole life?

What was the reaction in Spiritwood to these changes? By what we can hear said of them, it seems the reactions were typical a few felt uneasy others indifferent most were happy to welcome what seemed a long overdue renewal But the more drastic changes were to come a result of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council first announced in 1959 when John XXIII succeeded Pius XII as Pope

A Mass in the 50's

FUND RAISING CANVASS - 1961

It seemed that the time had come for a campaign to alert parishioners of their responsibility for the material well-being of their local church The pioneer days the depression the war years kept most people in this area quite poor But post war years were better and though recovery was slow the economy of the region was gaining ground Typically the habit of giving little to the Church was not to disappear as rapidly as the growth of the economy

The answer seemed to be a campaign to alert parishioners of the Church s need and their responsibility towards it A Toronto firm Catholic was engaged to organize the canvass Men from both Spiritwood and Mildred were brought together into a canvassing committee under the chairmanship of Louis Vey The ladies had their own committee hosted by Mrs L Delisle from Mildred and Mrs E Levasseur from Spiritwood A booklet was printed describing the joint canvass

The goal was to obtain pledges from each and every family for a three year term as well as encourage a higher regular weekly contribution The purpose of the meetings so raised were for a building fund for a new church and rectory in Spiritwood and to complete sacristy paint church and rectory etc in Mildred

Perhaps the canvass did not achieve all it was meant to do but told make parish owners aware that their weekly contributions should increase From the average thirty to forty dollar collections before the canvass the 1962 collections were generally over one hundred dollars per Sunday Total parish income jumped from three thousand dollars in 1960 to six thousand dollars in 1962 With the increased income monies were set aside which eventually were used to purchase the rectory from Fr Tim for the next parish priest

FR. CLEMENT PROVENCHER

Assistant Pastor

In the fall of 1962 Medstead and Shell Lake were added as missions of the Spiritwood Mildred parish Fr Provencher came to help Fr Tim as assistant He was to stay here for one year

With two resident priests (the only time this happened in Spiritwood) the ministry was shared On Sundays with four points to cover it still gave each two or three masses to say

Fr Provencher was handy with hammer and saw and used his talents to do some of the remodelling in Notre Dame Hall After a year Father was not in too good health, so left to go to Duck Lake for a time From there his illness would get the best of him and he left to go back to Montreal where he could obtain better medical help

MILDRED - THE LATTER YEARS

After Fr Lemaire left St Albert the Great parish would never quite be the same It would have resident pastors for only brief intervals and more often it would be served by priests out of Prince Albert or from Spiritwood

In 1953 Fr Van den Akker pastor at Laventure would take over the pastoral care of Mildred as well As the residence was better in Mildred he moved there returning on Sundays to say Mass at Laventure The following spring 1954 Spiritwood was also added to his care so he moved again By July he was appointed to Arborfield and Mildred became vacant

For almost two years 1954 to 1956 the ministry was assured by priests from Prince Albert Fr S Urbanoski and Fr Marcel Belanger primete Then in July 1956 it seemed the parish would have a new beginning Fr Roland Gaudet became resident pastor But that didn t last by November Mildred became a mission of Spiritwood with Fr Timmermans as pastor

The records give a little more information about these years 1956 to 1962 The parish had a Ladies Altar Society doing a splendid job in caring for the Church and in raising funds During the winters there were regular bingo-card parties Summer brought the annual church picnic

Mildred church and rectory

usually at the Delisle farm. During the summer holidays Catechism days were held at the school usually taught by Sisters from Spiritwood. And the annual Fowl Supper only enhanced the cooking reputation of the Mildred ladies. Sunday Masses were scheduled regularly; collections yielded eight dollars to ten dollars per Sunday. Some thirty four or forty families made up the parish.

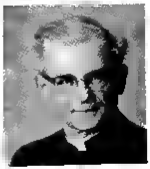
Projects during this period involved patching the stone masonry foundation of the church, enlarging the sacristy, finishing the steeple; most of the work done in 1957.[5]

By 1962 roads and communications had made distances shorter. Eventually Mildred's school had been closed and children bused to Spiritwood. So when Fr. Tim inherited the mission of Medstead, giving him four places to say Mass (Shell Lake was also in his area), Mildred was to be closed as a parish. There was a Christmas Midnight Mass there in 1962 but on the following Sunday or New Years' day, according to recollections, the last mass was said. From then on, Mildred became part of Sacred Heart Parish.

In 1970, during the moving of the Laventure Church, Mildred Church was reopened briefly for one Sunday mass from July to November, then left idle again. By 1975 the building was beginning to show signs of deteriorating, and after a meeting of parishioners of the area, it was decided to sell the building to John Wingerter to serve as a warehouse. The proceeds were to go to renovate the Spiritwood Church. Later, Mr. Wingerter resold the building to another religious group, in whose possession it now stands.

St. Albert-the-Great Parish has thus faded out of existence. Only the cemetery, one mile south of town, still remains. The rectory had been sold in 1967.

THE DAYS OF FATHER CAMPAGNA IN LAVENTURE



Fr. J. A. Campagna

By the mid fifties things were really beginning to get slow in Laventure. People had moved away, farms were larger, those who were left were travelling to towns for their shopping. The work of the pastor would especially be affected when the Catholic students of the area were assimilated into the Spiritwood Separate School. There they would be instructed in the Faith. Father's ministry was, therefore, a quiet one.

While in Laventure, Father Campagna began to sympathize with the farmers, and ever tried an agricultural experiment of raising hogs. Barns became part of the yard at Laventure. Another of his abilities was to make excellent taffy from maple syrup! The writer can vouch for that.

For a second time in just a few years another young parishioner was to be ordained to the priesthood. Florido Turgeon had joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, and had now finished his novitiate and most of his theological studies. Family and friends gathered with the parish to celebrate on December 21, 1956. Sisters from Spiritwood were in charge of the singing. It was another highlight in the dying years of St. Bonaventure parish.

Ordination of Fr. F. Turgeon

Fr. Campagna's ministry there continued until December 1962. His neighboring pastor, Fr. Auclair, passed away suddenly. Leoville was left vacant. Father Campagna was asked to move, and to bring the registers and records of Laventure with him. He would continue to care for the parish from Leoville. Later, it was decided to suspend church services to Laventure altogether.

The last Sunday Mass at the St. Bonaventure church was to be during the final week of February, 1964. It would remain vacant except for a period in 1970, after the old church in Spiritwood had been demolished, it was used for a few Sundays to have Mass. As well, a wedding took place there on July 15, 1970, fittingly by Father Florido Turgeon, for his cousins, Noel and Doris.

So really after 1964, parishioners would go north or south for their church services, Spiritwood or Leoville. Better roads, better times, better automobiles, fewer farmers in the area, bussing of children to central schools, all were factors to render the country parish of Laventure obsolete.

When Spiritwood was in need of a new church building, and began looking at the Laventure building, it was with reluctant nostalgia that parishioners of St. Bonaventure agreed to see it move south. The Bishop permitted the move, and in a formal act, an official letter dated March 12, 1970, he dissolved the parish as a Church entity. The letter explains that since the church is no longer used, since parishioners are going elsewhere for religious services, and after considering the situation, it seemed appropriate to divide the territory of Laventure parish on a line running east and west between Section 17 and Section 8, Township 52, Range 9, West of 3rd, north of this line would henceforth belong to Leoville parish, south to Spiritwood. And the Bishop concludes:

"After having studied attentively the situation of the three parishes concerned, in virtue of the powers granted me and for the spiritual welfare of the faithful, we decree the suppression of the Laventure parish (Christus Dominus, Oct. 25, 1965, No. 32, and Ecclesiae Sanctae, Aug. 6, 1966, No. 21). Moreover, we have decided that the archives of the parish of Laventure, especially the parish registers and matrimonial documents, be kept at the parish of Leoville."

That made it official, and the departure of the church building in September would be the last entry in the history of the St. Bonaventure parish of Laventure.

FR. PHILIPPE PELLETIER

Seventh Pastor

It was 1966, twelve years after Fr. Tim's arrival in Spiritwood. He had spent more time here than any other pastor had or would. Parishioners were getting used to this active outgoing pastor. When he was transferred to Hudson Bay, people had a little difficulty adapting to a different type of pastor, but equally sincere and dedicated, Fr. Philippe Pelletier.

Fr. P. Pelletier

Fr. Pelletier's first decision with the board of trustees was to buy the house which Fr. Tim had bought and owned. At the bargain cost price, it became officially the parish rectory. The parish did not have sufficient funds, so had to get a five thousand dollar loan. In a few years, the loan was paid.

The parish also had to look forward to the need of doing something about the church building. The foundations were giving way, the floor had a wavy appearance, it was to all intents and purposes, beyond repair. The project of a new building had been mentioned during the 1961 canvass. It was becoming more and more urgent.

Could the parish afford it? The rectory had been just bought and now an even costlier task lay ahead. Fr. Pelletier mentions that he once made a comment after an interment at Laventure that it was too bad the building there was not in Spiritwood. Perhaps the seed was sown but the actual planning was left to the next pastor.

In 1969 Fr. Pelletier left Spiritwood for St. Louis.

SEPARATE & PUBLIC SCHOOL AMALGAMATION

Another era was about to begin as far as the Separate School was concerned. Back in early 1965 Catholics at their annual school meeting had discussed the feasibility of constructing a new High School. It was partially a question of space but also because new curriculums being introduced especially in the sciences required laboratory and library facilities.

But the Board and ratepayers faced difficulties. Finances were already hard pressed. The number of Division 4 students hardly warranted the expense involved, so the Board struggled with alternatives.

Earlier the Public School Board had built a new High School. But it too lacked the necessary lab facilities and did not have a gym. Their number of Division 4 students though larger than the Catholics was still not high enough to warrant enlarging their facilities.

The two Boards began to meet to examine the possibility of a joint venture. At first feelings and doubts about each other's position presented a stumbling block to fruitful negotiation. Also the Unit Board did not seem to be favorable to any form of amalgamation. It must be noted here that since the founding of the Separate School the area of Spiritwood had been transferred to the Medstead Unit.

In 1966 after Spiritwood became a town the local school boards were enlarged from three to five members each. Negotiations were again attempted and after numerous meetings and trips to Regina a mutual agreement was reached.

The High School building would be enlarged by the necessary facilities. A tuition agreement was reached on the exchange of students between the jurisdictions of each Board. Division 4 and eventually Division 3 students of the Catholic system would go to the enlarged Public School. With the larger number of students the Public School would thus provide better facilities for all. Some teachers from the Separate School would be hired at the Public School. As well, Catholics were assured the continuing option of religious instruction during school hours to their students.

As chairmen of their respective Boards we can give credit to Dennis Walker and Ray Michaud as well as to the other members for seeking to understand and respect each other's position. The goodwill and understanding would, as we can see it now, create a greater mutual trust throughout the Spiritwood community.

So in 1968, the Separate School's last graduation took place. Henceforth Division 4 students would join their counterparts at the Public High School. The building was enlarged and in the fall of 1972 Division 3 students followed their elders and enrolled in the Public School as well.

By the amalgamation agreement religious instruction was permitted in the school. A new Christian Ethics program approved by the Department of Education as a credit course was primarily developed for separate schools. But it was flexible and was introduced at the Spiritwood Public School probably a first in the province. Sr. Aline Blais was hired in 1970 and began to teach the program to the seniors. Soon Catholics and non-Catholics were enrolling in the optional class. Similarly, broad acceptance has been granted to the religious classes at the junior level.

The Separate School has evolved through the years. In 1969 a formal agreement was drawn for a thirty three year lease for the property. It sits on from the Church until then there was simply an unspoken entente. And in recent years the principal's task has been in the hands of laymen, whereas it was previously held by Sisters. More at ease in its finances and in its entente with the whole community, the Spiritwood Catholic Separate School is thriving and well!

FR. GILLES DOUCETTE

Eighth Pastor

To build a church without having any funds with which to do it. That was the task that confronted Fr. Doucette when he arrived in Spiritwood in July 1969. But it did not scare him and it was not very long before he began stirring things up.

Fr. Gilles Doucette

The solution to the first problem seemed to lie in the solid church building at Laventure sitting there empty and unused. Before long the whole question of moving the structure was considered, plans made and the project underway. It deserves a special chapter all to itself.

Fr. Doucette did not limit his attention to the task of obtaining a suitable church building. Church implies many other facets that also must be built with his tact in getting volunteers to help him he strove ahead to renew the parish in many different ways.

The parish already had its Separate School, its catechetical programs, its Catholic teachers, the Sisters had done much for the religious education of the students. The Canadian Catechism with its new approach had been introduced. But through a new emphasis on parent priest teacher meetings, days of renewal for parents, interest of the pastor at the

school Fr Gilles pushed forth a real renewal of vision The new approach was pursued so as to influence the pastoral approach towards the whole of parish life During these years Christian Ethics was introduced at the High School Fr Gilles had much to do in this step as will be further written about in the paragraphs about the school

Children were not the only ones to whom the renewal was directed efforts were also made to revitalize the vision adults had of the church and its teachings Through his sermons or homilies Father Doucette gave his people much to think about But he did not stop there The Lenten Sessions year after year allowed an opportunity for the adults to hear about and discuss the latest developments in the Church s teachings and discipline It was also a way of getting adults involved in building a true local Church community Many remember the Growth in Faith series of 1971 the Images of Revelation series of 1972 the Building Bridges sessions of 1972 Add to that the Christian Formation Course given to the Knights of Columbus in 1970 Then what about the home Masses as occasions of deeper understanding and participation

The liturgy was in full evolution by this period of time The new order of the Mass the new Rite of Baptism communal celebrations of Penance were being introduced As the changes came Father Gilles took time to explain them and still keep pace with the renewal His instructions on the penitential rite the liturgy of the Word the rites of Baptism gave new meaning to community worship His preparation projects for Christmas and Easter including the Penitential Celebrations the introduction of Missalettes new hymnals and probably many other details now forgotten brought life to community prayer

Lay involvement was another factor dear to Father Doucette Already before him lay people had been encouraged to be lectors commentators or to fill other responsibilities This was now enhanced and extended to the preparation the decor (e g the altarboard giving the theme thought of the day or season) the execution of many liturgical happenings

Similar activity was happening in yet another field out reach beyond the strict parish limits Support was given to A A meetings for a time held at the rectory the pastor followed and aided their efforts Fr Gilles with other clergy in Sprutwood inspired and guided the formation of a Youth Club bringing together teenagers and young couples working in unison towards spiritual civic cultural and social goals The numbers involved and the projects undertaken were truly impressive Some of their initiatives have continued such as the Winter Festival And beyond doubt the members gained vital experience in community action

Ecumenism comes to mind when we mention common undertakings with the other clergy Father Doucette was actively involved in the local ministerial association There were joint services Remembrance Day Graduation and other occasions Many recall the joint preparation and celebration of Christmas 1972 with the United Church congregation for many it remains a memorable occasion There were also joint projects put on by church groups together such as the great fowl suppers Some even remember the political entente with other ministers with mixed feelings

MOVING THE LAVENTURE CHURCH

Already in 1961 it was foreseen that the church building in Sprutwood would have to be replaced But a rectory was chosen as a priority first purchased by Fr Tim then by the parish Now that the rectory was bought and paid for attention could be focused on what to do about the church

The first action taken by Fr Doucette upon his arrival was to set up committees to study what would be involved in moving the building at Laventure to Sprutwood That seemed a better alternative than building a new church from scratch especially if you have no funds with which to build

On October 13 1969 the committees met. Fr Jourdain from Battleford was here to suggest plans for the Laveolure building The decision reached and later ratified by the parishioners was to sell and move away the old church and move the Laventure church to Sprutwood Already by October 26th the parish bulletin called for tenders to buy and remove the old building There seems to have been no response for the tenders were renewed the following spring

During the winter of 1969 70 a first effort was made at raising funds for the project By the end of April one thousand five hundred dollars had been collected hardly enough to even start the endeavor The Fund Raising Committee drew up plans for a four year program To launch the program the first thing to do was to canvass all parishioners for donations and pledges The objective was twenty four thousand dollars over four years or six thousand per year the sums estimated would be needed to move install and renovate the church building Some thirty five men were to canvass the parishioners from door to door in the week of May 31 to June 7 But the canvassing seems to have dragged on for a few months By reports some eighteen thousand dollars was pledged six thousand of which was received enough for the first phase

Phase I consisted in removing the old church building the foundations and bringing the Laventure church into Sprutwood The old church was sold to Walter Mamer with the provision that it be removed and debris burned On April 26 1970 the parishioners help was requested to move to the Laventure Church all the articles to be salvaged from the old church It was to be the last time Mass would be said in the 1928 landmark The building was partially moved away some of it salvaged the rest pushed into the cellar diesel fuel poured on it and fire set to it under the supervision of the Sprutwood fire brigade

At the beginning of June the new foundations were poured mostly through voluntary help Everything was now

ready to receive the building from Laventure the movers (Winbow s from Saskatoon) were not so it wasn t until September that the structure finally made its appearance in Spiritwood

The church before demolition

The end of the old church

Moving church

Thanks to the hospitality of the Anglican community Mass continued to be said in Spiritwood on Sundays at their church Also another Mass was said first at Laventure (during May and June) then at Mildred (from July to November)

After the church was set on its foundations and a few alterations made it was opened for worship on November 22 1970 the Feast of Christ the King So ended Phase I of "Moving Church" at a cost of eleven thousand with only two thousand unpaid

Phase II saw the building stuccoed the doors and windows repaired the front sidewalk poured the ceiling insulated By May 1972 Phase III was initiated paying the balance owed doing some landscaping Phase IV to begin in 1973 was cut short when Fr Doucette was named to go to Duck Lake in August Total cost of work done in the project was near sixteen thousand dollars all paid for and a slight reserve in the fund some one thousand five hundred dollars

PARISH COUNCIL IS PLANNED

Vatican II states that the laity can be called in various ways to a more direct form of co operation in the apostolate of the hierarchy (constitution on the Church No 33) Just as the diocese should have a special pastoral council composed of clergy religious and lay people (Christus Dominus No 27) it is a logical conclusion that parishes should have a similar council bringing together priest religious and laity to share in the mission of the Parish Church

In Spiritwood parish as almost everywhere else lay trustees counseled the pastor on the material administration rarely on other matters It is also true that the laity were involved in many apostolic and pastoral activities through the C W L the Knights of Columbus and other groups The Parish Council was created only to enhance the collective responsibility for the Church by pastor Sisters and laity in all areas of pastoral activity

In 1969 when Fr Doucette organized committees for the church moving got others together to organize the Lenten sessions helped the Youth Group organize allowed more lay involvement in the liturgy he was laying the foundation of the future council But it wasn t until the spring of 1973 that he explicitly brought up the topic And in his usual way he was thorough in his explanation of a Parish Council both through his sermons and his Sunday bulletins over a period of a few weeks By June 10 1973 the first draft of a Constitution for the "Sacred Heart Pastoral Parish Council" was ready for public distribution

Before anything further could be done to organize the Council Fr Doucette was to leave Spiritwood

FR. GILLES AUMONT
Ninth Pastor

August 1973 Fr Gilles Aumont arrived from Marcelin to become the ninth pastor of Sacred Heart Parish It wasn t easy to follow Fr Doucette The active period to which the parishioners had become accustomed over the previous four years stopped abruptly Fr Aumont s approach was somewhat different the parishioners seemed to expect the same as before

Still there was a continuous push forward Using much of the basic of the Constitution of the Parish Council printed in June elections were held on October 7 1973 The six members held their first meeting on October 15 and co-ordinators from the group were appointed for the committees By the end of October the committees were formed and had held their first meetings The Council was functioning

Fr Aumont s general health kept him from meeting the expectations of the Council But eventually this may have proved beneficial for they were brought into a situation where they felt obliged to take on many responsibilities hitherto left to the pastor It also brought together the people for one Sunday Mass rather than two The committees helped with the finances the liturgy printing the Sunday bulletin (Mr and Mrs Jerry Germann must be mentioned here) and the general welfare of the Parish

In April 1974 Fr Aumont left the parish for an extended holiday – but as it was to turn out he would be replaced as pastor later in the summer In the meantime Fr Gerald Pouliot pastor of Leoville took care of this "enlarged parish" It meant four masses on weekends besides the other responsibilities After urgent appeals to the Bishop another pastor was named in late June but because of previous commitments he could not come to the parish until August

RECENT YEARS

When Fr Henri Renaud arrived on August 10 1974 the parishioners seemed happy to have yet another resident pastor their tenth! The newly formed Parish Council was anxious to undertake some of the tasks they had been given The new pastor gradually became acquainted with the parochial situation

Fr Henri Renaud

In September the financial situation was reviewed with the parishioners They had been generous during the campaign to move the church but now had let things get lax The final phase of the program initiated with Fr Doucette had not really been completed True some still contributed to the building fund as well as to a special organ fund started during Father Doucette s last year but with less enthusiasm

Around the church the topsoil had been prepared so in October the sod for the lawn was laid In November and December the Finance Committee went ahead with a mini-drive to get the balance of funds needed for a new organ It was bought in time for Christmas

In 1975 the cement steps and side door were completed paid for by Knights of Columbus The water connect on from the town main to the church was made and water was available for the new lawn During the summer efforts centered on celebrating the twenty fifth anniversary of the Separate School which is described in another chapter

Attention then focused on the priorities of action the church needed renovations so did the rectory At the February 1976 parishioners meeting it was felt that the rectory renovations should come first A special appeal through second collections and donations was launched but failed to engender any great enthusiasm The Finance Committee studied various options and decided a direct appeal to parishioners was best

SACRED HEART'S OWN FIVE-YEAR PLAN

By May 1976 it was obvious that another concerted effort would be needed to complete the church building and to renovate the rectory The Finance Committee endorsed by the Parish Council traced out a five-year plan The objective would be to complete the exterior of the church building What was in the building fund would be used to renovate the rectory or if the present rectory were sold to pay for the balance of a new one

Needed was an estimated thirty five thousand to forty thousand or about eight thousand dollars annually The plan was explained to all parishioners at church and by mail asking for a minimum average of eighty dollars per family each year for the building fund

The response was good and so the renovation took place as follows

In 1976 the church roof was re shingled In 1977 exterior woodwork on the church was repainted and rectory windows roof steps and the interior were renovated In 1978 church walls were insulated ceiling and walls were finished back of the church was remodelled sanctuary furniture was redone lighting was changed floor was carpeted A vacuum cleaner was purchased as well as a set of drums for the church In 1979 the sacristy was completely renovated with new cupboards walls carpet and running water hot and cold

To date the cost has been about thirty thousand dollars for the church and six thousand for the rectory With one year to go we are still within the previsions of 1976 The steeple still needs refinishing Nothing has been done to the heating

system some mention had been made of converting it to natural gas. Later the parish might want to consider doing something about pews. There are three different types now, relics of different ages.

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARIES

The silver jubilee of the Separate School was marked with special festivities on July 1, 1975. At the same time parishioners recalled that it was also twenty five years that the Sisters of the Presentation were amongst its Trustees, teachers. Sisters, graduates of the quarter century were invited back to the parish to join in the celebration.

Some former graduates took advantage of the occasion to organize an alumni gathering. On the evening before the jubilee festivities, former grads from far and wide joined to renew old friendships and recall their school days.

The next day guests registered at the school office was served. Classrooms were open and decorated with many displays depicting the twenty five year history of the school. Former teachers, students, parents shared memories. A forenoon thanksgiving Mass at the church was offered by concelebrating former and present pastors and visiting priests. Fr. Timmermans gave the homily and various people representative of the occasion shared in the functions.

Shortly after Mass a pancake breakfast was served by the Knights of Columbus at the arena. Then at 2 p.m. a social hour program retraced in an interesting and humorous fashion the years of the school's and of the Sisters' history in the parish. Tributes were made to trustees, teachers, pastors, ratepayers, students, but especially to the Sisters for their dedication and service.

The festivities concluded with a pot-barbecue supper. It was a memorable day that involved every committee of the Parish Council and a large number of other volunteers.

PARISH COUNCIL ACTIVITY

The renovation of church and rectory, the celebration of the Separate School's twenty fifth anniversary may appear as the more obvious work of the Council. But this is only a partial view. We must also consider the less obvious, yet no less important tasks of building the spiritual edifice of the church in recent years.

Started years before, the programs of catechetics in the school and adult renewal in the parish were continued. The Religious Education Committee worked hard at Lenten Sessions, one in 1974, all on their own, and others in '75, '76, '77, '78 and '79 with the help of the Pastor. In 1976 an ecumenical Lenten Session on St. Mark's Passion was organized in co-operat on with other Spiritwood church groups. The same committee planned pre-Christmas preparation and shared in other joint-committee activities.

Liturgy is an ongoing life action, but since its inception the Liturgical Committee has certainly kept it alive and prayerful, in the tradition of previous pastors. Guitars, drums, and an organ are a regular part of our community worship. Congregational singing, decor, participation by young and old, special emphasis on liturgical seasons all add up to an uplifting praise of the Lord. Penitential celebrations are held regularly before Christmas and Easter. And an effort is made to extend this living liturgy to weddings, funerals and baptisms.

The Social and Apostolic Committee has also worked hard because this scope of activity is so broad and undefined they have not always known how to become involved. They have tried to help elderly get to church, organize social gatherings, church cleaning, lunches after funerals, some celebrations and other diverse activities.

The Finance Committee has helped Father look after the ordinary administration as well as the church completion program already mentioned.

The central elected committee meets on a regular basis to activate, stimulate and co-ordinate the activities of all committees. In 1975 its desire to exchange with other Parish Councils led to the workshops in February 1976 and in March 1977 in Prince Albert, gathering representatives from many other parishes in the diocese. It helped in the setting up of the first workshop, after having originated the idea with three other Parish Councils. In 1978 and 1979 the Inter Council Meeting was dropped due to lack of interest of some councils.

THE LADIES OF THE PARISH

We have already spoken of the C.W.L. in the early part of our history. We must now complete that by mentioning their activity since being re-established in 1943. Over these years of service many have given numerous years of service; just as an example—we can mention Annie McMullan and Simone Fellettier who were honored in 1968 as twenty five year members.

The records of the 1940's are sketchy, but it can be assumed that the involvement was similar to that before and after this decade. In the 1950's and 1960's the ladies were very active in many different kinds of apostolic ventures. Here too, as with the Knights—fund raising seemed to occupy an important part of their efforts: card parties, teas, socials, fowl suppers, bazaars—catering, Cooking, turkeys—handing water, washing dishes, serving tables were chores that became almost commonplace for them.

But that was not the entire extent of their activity. Caring for church cleanliness, visiting the sick, community projects, canvasses relating to Catholic women on the diocesan, provincial and national levels, missionary work—these were some of their interests. In 1946, they hosted the diocesan

convention and in later years a couple of regional gatherings of the organization

With the advent of the 1970's much of their field of activity was absorbed into the scope of the Parish Council The membership dwindled as did the interest and finally the local C W L faded into non-existence in 1976

This does not mean the ladies of the parish are no longer active Many of them are members of Parish Council Committees The Catering Committee calls on all to help in numerous functions each year The church renovations in the past few years have been done with the help of hefty contributions from the ladies' work Besides the financial aspect they do feel it provides the community with a local catering service

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

Besides the C W L the parish organization that has had enormous impact on church life are the Knights of Columbus Their work has been varied and spans over thirty years of our history It can be summarized as being a medium through which Catholic men have taken on responsibilities in the growth and wellbeing of the Church in our area

The first mention of Knights in the records of our parish dates back to November 20 1949 when a meeting was announced at the church For the first few years they were members of Debden Council getting together locally for activities here On August 10 1952 they organized themselves into a sub-council this gave them more autonomy but they were still affiliated with the Debden group They would function this way for the next ten years keeping touch with the Council by visits back and forth to Debden

By 1962 the group grew with forty nine members they applied for a Charter as an independent council It was granted November 10 1962 Thus was born Spiritwood Knights of Columbus Council No 5353

Over the years they have been active in helping the local church in many ways Fund raising has been one important aspect Through bingos card parties dinners socials they have contributed much towards financing church improvements In the early 50's they were one of the forces supporting the Catholic Separate School In 1961 they were very much involved in the general canvass that took place In 1970 they spearheaded a project to buy a car for the diocesan catechetical field worker They were there whenever any major project needed them co-operation And as a society of mutual aid their scope for action went beyond to various endeavours

As the Parish Council began taking shape they had to search for a new role in the parish and for a time through lack of interest the Council just about faded out of existence But the persistence of a few kept it alive and it is now on its way to recovery

MUSIC, SOUL OF LITURGY

Music adds that note of beauty so much a part of community worship Singing is surely a form of prayer when it is directed towards the Most High or when it uplifts us to Him

Over the years of our history liturgical music has evolved From the sedate organ to the lively guitar or pounding drum each has its own expression of praise From the Latin and Gregorian chant to the modern vernacular melodies each with its own adepts

Gleaning from the records it seems Fr Beaulac purchased Spiritwood's first organ in 1931 for seventy-five dollars but he warns it would be sent back if not paid for by the parishioners! What happened? Later in the years 1935-36 Fr Burrell speaks of paying a rental fee of fifty cents per month for the organ after that it would seem the organ was finally paid for

Obviously since the first Mass of Christmas 1928 parishioners have sung In earlier times it was reserved for the choir from the loft Only in the sixties was the crowd really invited to join in the organ was moved down so to invite easier participation The introduction of the vernacular (modern languages) into the liturgy brought about more singing in the language of the people

But whatever the style or the format musicians and singers have always been important to good liturgy There have been many who have devoted themselves in these functions through the years either in Spiritwood or in the other surrounding churches We feel compelled to mention specially two of these

The first is Mrs Juliette Rodrigue who was organist in Mildred for many years After moving to Spiritwood she continued going to Mildred Medstead and Laventure with Father Tim to play the organ We consider she deserves mention because of the length and extent of her dedication to church music

The other person we want to mention is Mrs Dorothy Neault When marrying Lao little did she realize she was also marrying a job in the Catholic Church The Sunday after her wedding in 1944 even though a non-Catholic she was enlisted to play the organ at the Mass Until and after she joined the church in 1957 Mrs Neault had her place before the organ keyboard It wasn't until her eyes began creating real problems for her that she semi retired from her duties at the organ that was in 1975 But even since then she has been called out of retirement to play at funerals and a few other occasions In 1977 the parish presented her a bouquet of roses and a plaque in tribute for her long and continuous devotion

As for instruments--the parish purchased its first electronic organ in 1957 The previous one was falling apart The cost of the new organ was one thousand five hundred dollars a far cry from the seventy five dollars paid in 1931! In 1975 a new organ was purchased for two thousand five hundred

dollars. Each time the organs were mitiated at the Christmas Mass. Last year 1978 we also purchased a set of drums. Guitars are owned by the musicians who play for us.

As a final note to this section let us just add that the Sisters, since their arrival in the parish have almost continuously had a music teacher. They have shared their talents with the church congregation by directing choirs, teaching others to play the organ and guitars, playing themselves and doing the many tasks that are linked in the execution of good church music. So here again we are indebted to them.

UNSUNG HEROES

So many have contributed so few have been recognized! There is as tradition in the military world to have a grave to honor the unknown soldier, representative of all those who died, but remain unnamed. This chapter could be called the page of the unnamed heroes of our parish.

We have avoided naming so many people who worked long and hard for the Church in our area. Laventure, St. Stephen's, Mildred had trustees of their own. The Separate school had its board with the devoted efforts of people. Then there were the teachers, those of the early days in the country schools and those of latter years. There were the Sisters of Presentation and other Sisters who came to teach in the summer — they too have not been named. Organizations such as the C.W.L., the K.C.'s, the Sacred Heart League, the Committees of Parish Council, the Knights of the Altar and others we may have forgotten, they had their presidents, their leaders and their membership. The musicians, the choirs and other forms of lay ministry involve persons. Even if we did have complete records, how could we list all the names? And what of the silent and unobserved contributors to parish life?

The names we have mentioned in this book are therefore to be taken as representative of all those who are unnamed. If then names appear they are not necessarily the more deserving, not the most important. Their mention helps to give a continuity, a realism to the events, a face behind which stands so many others, the unsung heroes of our history!

GOLDEN JUBILEE

And now we celebrate the golden anniversary of our parish. Truly we do want to celebrate the love of God for us as it has been manifested through the years. We also look forward with confidence to the future, trusting that the generations to come will also have reason to celebrate fifty years down the road.

To end a song composed locally for our anniversary, meant to be sung to the tune of "Long, Long Ago":

Fifty years have gone by
since this parish was founded.
That was long, long ago, long ago
With hard work and devotion
soon churchbells resounded
Long, long ago, long ago

With a history so old
many tales could be told
Just a look through the files
Bring back memories and smiles
The start of this venture
Began in Laventure
Long, long ago, long ago

A big thanks to the pastors
who came through the years
Long, long ago, long ago
It soon began showing
the parish was growing
Long, long ago, long ago

From hard work in the woods
they built a church in Spiritwood
That was the start of our Sacred Heart
Now we join with elation at this celebration
That started long, long ago, long ago

PASTORS

J. A. Beaulac	1929	May 10	1934	
Marcisse Burrell	May 13	1934	Sept. 14	1940
Replacements				
H. M. Dussault, o.p.	Oct.	1940	Mar.	1941
L. Busssiere, o.m.i.	Mar.	1941	Apr.	1941
A. Dumas, o.p.	Apr.	1941	Dec.	1941
N. M. Ferron, o.p.	Dec.	1941	Aug.	1949
Gilles Roy, o.p.	Sept.	1949	Jan. 24	1954
Replacement				
Y. Guenn	Jan.	1954	May	1954
Martin Van den Akker	May	1954	Aug.	1954
W. G. Timmermans	Aug.	1954	Aug.	1966
Clement Provencher, Asst.	Aug.	1962	Aug.	1963
L. P. Pelletier	Sept.	1966	July.	1969
Gilles Doucette	July	1969	July.	1973
Gilles Aumont	Aug.	1973	Apr.	1974
Replacement				
G. Poulin	Apr.	1974	Aug.	1974
Henri Renaud	Aug.	1974		

N.B. 1940 Fr. Burrell became ill he was temporarily replaced by Fr. Dussault who stayed until March, 1941, then Fr. Bussiere came for a few weeks, followed by Fr. Dumas serving the parish from Laventure. In 1941 after Fr. Burrell had passed away of cancer, Fr. Ferron was named pastor.

1954 - The parish was without a pastor for a few months Filling in during this time was Fr Yvon Guenn p m e

1973 Again with a resident priest for a few months This time Fr G Poulot filled in from Leoville

TRUSTEES

Jules Sarrazin	1928
Luc Sasseville	1928-29
Nap Ranger	1928-29-30
Charles Manseau	1929-30-31
Serge Fournier	1930-31 32
Leon Fortras	1931 32
Philippe Francoeur	1932-33 34
Ernest Sarrazin	1933 34
Pierre Boutin	1933 34-35
Louis Crequer	1935 36-37
Paul Cote	1934 35 36
William Doucette	1935 36
J C Duval	1937 38 39
G E Audette	1937 38-39
G Charlebois	1938-39-40
Charles Vallee	1939
Art Lavoie	1940
John Labelle	1940
Thomas Collins	1941-42-43
Mathias Sarrazin	1941 42-43-44-45-46-47
Louis Vey	1941-42
Luc Sasseville	1943 44-45-46-47
Hylas Fontaine	1944-45-46-47
F Rabut	1948 49-50
J R Schell	1948
R Comet	1948-49
Isadore Doucet	1949-50-51-52
J B Bissiere	1950-51-52-53 54-55
P Dansereau	1951-52 53 54-55
Bruno Belanger	1955-56-57
R Comet	1956
Romeo Freneite	1956-57 58
Henri Doucet	1957 58
Pierre Francon	1957 58-59
Mathias Sarrazin	1958 59 60
Joseph Grosz	1959 60-61
Paul Bonneau	1960-61 62
Roland Chalifour	1961-62-63
Guy Honle	1962-63-64
L Verreault	1963-64
Fern Beaucheane	1964-65-66
Marcel Etcheverry	1965-66-67
Candale Poulin	1966-67-68
Robert Marion	1967 68-69
Ignace Schaan	1967-68-69-70-71 72 73
Paul Bonneau	1968-69 70
Mervin Seesoquasis	1969-70-71
Albert Willick	1970-71 72-73
Jean Ouellette	1971-72-73

PARISH COUNCIL - ELECTED MEMBERS

Corrie Pearson	1973-74-75-76-77 78-79
Ignace (Ned) Schaan	1973-74 75-76
Bert Turgeon	1973-74-75
Yolanda Honle	1973 74-75
Robert Martodam	1973-74-75 76-77
Sister Pat Brochu	1973-74
Sister Emma Rousseau	1975
Jean Heisler	1975-76-77
Jeannine Ouellette	1976-77
Armand Smith	1976 77 78
Robert Marion	1977 78-79
Beatrice Turgeon	1978 79
Joyce Willick	1978-79
George Willick	1978-79
Steve Simon	1979

PARISH COUNCIL - COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Too numerous to mention they are volunteers enlisted to serve on five different committees that cover the various facets of local church life They remain like so many others in our history as the unnamed heroes

BISHOPS OF PRINCE ALBERT, 1929-79

Joseph-Henri Prud homme	1924-1937
Reginald Duprat	1937-1952
Leo Blais	1952-1959
Laurent Morin	1959

POPES - 1929-1979 1929-1979

Pius XI	1922-1939
Pius XII	1939-1958
John XXIII	1958-1963
Paul VI	1963-1978
John Paul I	1978
John Paul II	1978-

Present day Separate School

The renewed convent.

Our church — inside

Our church — outside

1929 - 1979

Sacred Heart Parish

Spiritwood Sask

THE FIRST FIFTY YEARS

Sound of Music — The Lady — Symphony and Chorus

Music — Rodgers

I will celebrate You Love Forever

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Chapter 45 700
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Chapter 50 780
Chapter 51 796
Chapter 52 812
Chapter 53 828
Chapter 54 844
Chapter 55 860
Chapter 56 876
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Chapter 61 956
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Chapter 63 988
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Chapter 74 1164
Chapter 75 1180
Chapter 76 1196
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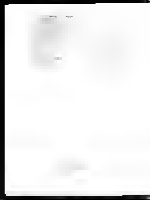

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SPECIAL TIPS OF THE TRADE

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Table 1

Alpha	1
Beta	2
Gamma	3
Delta	4
Epsilon	5
Zeta	6
Eta	7
Theta	8
Iota	9
Kappa	10
Lambda	11
Mu	12
Nu	13
Xi	14
Omicron	15
Pi	16
Rho	17
Sigma	18
Tau	19
Upsilon	20
Phi	21
Chi	22
Psi	23
Omega	24

Table 2

Red	100
Orange	101
Yellow	102
Green	103
Blue	104
Indigo	105
Violet	106

Table 3

Cat	200
Dog	201
Bird	202
Fish	203
Snake	204
Lizard	205
Turtle	206
Frog	207
Toad	208
Salamander	209
Newt	210
Gecko	211
Iguana	212
Chameleon	213
Komodo Dragon	214
Alligator	215
Crocodile	216
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Monitor Lizard	220
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Spectacled Caiman	257
Broad-snouted Caiman	258
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Banana	301
Cherry	302
Date	303
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Grape	306
Honeydew	307
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Lemon	309
Mango	310
Nectarine	311
Orange	312
Papaya	313
Quince	314
Raspberry	315
Strawberry	316
Tangerine	317
Ugli Fruit	318
Vanilla Bean	319
Watermelon	320
Xigua	321
Yellow Passion Fruit	322
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Table 5

Red	400
Orange	401
Yellow	402
Green	403
Blue	404
Indigo	405
Violet	406

Table 6

Cat	500
Dog	501
Bird	502
Fish	503
Snake	504
Lizard	505
Turtle	506
Frog	507
Toad	508
Salamander	509
Newt	510
Gecko	511
Iguana	512
Chameleon	513
Komodo Dragon	514
Alligator	515
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Tuatara	519
Monitor Lizard	520
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Frilled Lizard	525
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Racerunner	532
Tegu	533
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Broad-snouted Caiman	536
Dwarf Caiman	537
Yacare Caiman	538
Black Caiman	539
Gharial	540
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Monitor Lizard	542
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Broad-snouted Caiman	558
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Yacare Caiman	560
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Table 7

Alpha	600
Beta	601
Gamma	602
Delta	603
Epsilon	604
Zeta	605
Eta	606
Theta	607
Iota	608
Kappa	609
Lambda	610
Mu	611
Nu	612
Xi	613
Omicron	614
Pi	615
Rho	616
Sigma	617
Tau	618
Upsilon	619
Phi	620
Chi	621
Psi	622
Omega	623